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The University of Hard Knocks

The School That Completes Our Education

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

—Revelation 21:7

"Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And thus our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

—Shakespeare

A Lyceum and Chautauqua Lecture delivered since 1904 by Ralph Parlette, Editor of The Lyceum Magazine, Chicago

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Perhaps a Million People

HAVE PAID their money up to date to hear "The University of Hard Knocks" in Lyceum Courses, Chautauquas, Teachers' Institutes, Club Gatherings and other assemblages. Perhaps a thousand people have asked if the lecture could be gotten in book form. Perhaps a thousand more have written about it.

That is why it is here in book form. This is what they heard—or a part of it, for I have gathered up the overflow of many evenings and printed it. What is written here isn't the way I would write it; it is the way I said it. The lecture took this unconscious colloquial form before audiences. An audience makes a lecture, if the lecture survives. The first personal pronoun may seem to be overworked, because this is more a confession than a lecture, and you can't confess without saying "I."

I am just beginning to learn things. Every day I seem to learn better, and see better about something. I ought to wait till tomorrow to print this lecture, for tomorrow I shall know more and see how poor this lecture is.

But it is the best and sincerest I can do today. And you folks asked for it today. I wish I could shake the hand of every one of you and personally thank you.

Ralph Parlette.

The Lyceum Magazine,
Chicago,
Sept. 1, 1914.

What It's All About

NOBODY CAN GIVE US OR BUY US AN EDUCATION. We earn it in The University of Hard Knocks—the School of Service. Books and Colleges only give us some tools—some of the best tools in the world.

We must use the tools in the School of Service. It is the Service, the Struggle, the Sacrifice, the Overcoming, the Achievement, that brings the Knowing, the Understanding, the Success, the Happiness, the Strength, the Greatness, the Life.

"He who would be greatest among you, let him become the Greatest Servant." For Greatness is merely ability to carry great loads, to serve greatly.

You cannot buy a great arm; you earn it in physical service.

You cannot buy a great mind; you earn it in mental service.

You cannot buy a great character; you earn it in moral service.

The University of Hard Knocks is divided into two great colleges—The College of Needless Knocks (where we get our "bad luck") and the College of Needful Knocks (where we get our "good luck"). Every bump is a les-

son. We learn so slowly (it takes most of our lives to learn a few little lessons) because most of us are "naturally bright."

We don't know what we have memorized; we only know what we have vitalized. We only know what we have lived. We only know what the courts will take as evidence when they swear us in as witnesses.

How long will America be strong and go forward? It will depend upon how many "Gussie" children we raise.

We are not growing old; we are growing eternally young. All our life up to today has been merely preparation for today. This is the greatest, wisest, happiest day in all our lives.

We have finished our education when all the strife, discord, evil, have been pounded out of our lives, and when Peace, Harmony, Love, Wisdom and Understanding fill them. Eternity alone can finish our Education.

As we overcome, we ascend the Mountain of Life. We rise above the legacy of our limitations. We rise above troubles and storms into the sunshine. We rise to life's mountain summit and see the night below us. We have reached the new eternal day on the summit—God's Commencement Day!

God Help Us

To Know We are Little Children, Always Growing UP, but Never Finishing

* * *

God Help Us

To Keep On "Going South"
To Keep On Serving
To Keep On Overcoming
That
Our Days may be Longer, Stronger, Happier
That
We may have All The Good Things of Life
That
We may not "Rattle"

* * *

God Help Us

To Know That
YESTERDAY is Dead
TODAY is the Best Day of Our Life
TOMORROW is Going to be Better

The University of Hard Knocks

I

The Two Colleges

ALL OVER this land are fathers and mothers saying, "We haven't had much chance in our lives, but we are going to give our children every chance. We are going to give our children the best education OUR money can buy.

They think they can buy an education and give it to their children C.O.D.!

But they cannot do it. They can only open the gate and say, "Sic 'em, Tige!"

They can put money in their children's pockets, ideas in their heads and food in their stomachs. But the children do not yet own it—they must digest it.

We only own what we earn. We only know what we have lived. We only under-

stand what we have proven in the laboratories of our experience.

We can't get something for nothing.

* * *

We do not learn from books, we learn from bumps.

We learn in the one great school—The University of Hard Knocks. Its playground is the universe; its president is the Almighty.

Here we learn all we ever know, and write it in the only book we ever own—The Book of Our Experience.

Every bump we get is a lesson. If we learn the lesson with one bump, we don't get that bump any more; we get promoted to the next bump. But if we are "naturally bright" or there is something else the matter with us (and really about the worst thing that can be the matter with us is to be "naturally bright" and know it!), so that we don't learn that lesson with one bump, then that same bump has to come back and bump us again, and again, and again, until we do learn it. Afterwhile we realize in the lan-

guage of Shakespeare or somebody, "Every little bumplet has a meaning all its own."

As we get wiser and sort out our bumps, we discover we have had two kinds of bumps —bumps that we needed, and bumps that we did not need. Bumps that we bumped into and bumps that bumped into us.

That is, we discover that The University of Hard Knocks has two colleges—The College of Needless Knocks and The College of Needful Knocks.

Children, I am afraid you won't believe what I am going to say. You can't tell young people anything. They are "naturally bright" and know better. So you'll just have to bump your heads where we older ones have bumped our heads! But if you'll remember what I am going to say, it will feel like a poultice after while.

* * *

The Needless Knocks

AH! How I remember one early Needless Knock! It was back at the time when I was trying to run our home to suit myself. I sat in the highest chair in

the family circle! I was four years old and ready to graduate. That day they had me in my little high-chair throne right up beside the dinner-table. The coffee-pot was within grabbing distance.

I became enamored with that coffee-pot. I decided I needed it in my business. I reached over there to get the coffee-pot. Just then I discovered a woman beside me. She was the most meddlesome woman I had ever known. I hadn't tried to do a thing in four years that woman hadn't tried to "butt in on" and stop.

I did want that coffee-pot. Nobody knows how I wanted that coffee-pot! One thing thou lackest—a coffee-pot! Just as I was going to get it, that woman said, "Don't touch that!"

The longer I thought about it the madder I became. What right has this female to interfere with every plan I make? Now I've stood this petticoat tyranny four years, and it's time to stop it. (I thought this, I did not say it. There is a fine point.) Then I stopped it. I got the coffee-pot. I know I got the coffee-pot. I got it unanimously!

I know when I got it, and I know where I got it! I spilled about a gallon of that redhot juice all over me. I can feel it yet!

There were weeks after that when I was upholstered. They put applebutter on me, and kerosene, and starch, and white-of-an-egg and rags, and anything the neighbors could think of, they brought over and rubbed on little Ralphie. Because I had gotten the coffee-pot. Because I had had my own little foolish way.

My mother had a queer way of only telling me once. She wouldn't repeat or argue it. She'd say, "Don't!" and then she'd go on with her knitting. Why don't mothers knit any more?

I could go ahead and do it after that. She wouldn't even look at me. The neighbors used to say my mother was cruel with that "angel child." But the neighbors never knew what kind of an inseet she was trying to raise. That was the quickest, kindest and best way to teach a little stubborn, self-willed boy like myself that if he didn't hear her that onee—and heed, then go on, Ralphie, your coffee-pot is ready.

It was always ready. I never disobeyed my mother in my life that a coffee-pot didn't spill on me and I got my blisters. She didn't inflict them. She wasn't much of an inflicter. Father attended to that in the laboratory back of the parsonage!

Yes, you're right. I'm one of them!

* * *

The years that since have passed have taught me that the College of Needless Knocks is run on the same plan. The Voice of Wisdom says to each of us, "Child of humanity, walk in the right path; you'll be wiser and happier." Then we are not stopped. We are told to do right, but we are not compelled to do right.

We are free im-moral agents!

We get off the right path, get on a wrong path, and it seems fine. It leads downward, and therefore is so easy to walk in, for we just slide downward. Paths that lead upward are harder to walk in, for they require climbing. Sooner or later the coffee-pot spills; we get our blisters and Needless Knocks. If you haven't gotten them, you have them coming.

I used to call them my "bad luck." I know better now; they are the punishment for our sins. And lucky are we if we learn the lesson with one bump. One time at a fair I paid a seeress two dollars to look into my honest palm. Then she said: "It hain't your fault—you wasn't born right, you was born under an unlucky star!" You don't know how good that made me feel! It wasn't my fault, I was just unlucky and it had to be. But now I know better. I know we all get bumped and the lucky one is the one who learns the lesson with one bump and doesn't get bumped twice in the same place. Next time he sees that bump coming he says, "Excuse me, it hath a familiar look," and he dodges it.

If you are just drifting in your life, depend upon it, you are going downward. You cannot go upward without overcoming. Also notice that anything that runs itself, runs downward. Churches, schools, lyceum courses, chautauquas, reform movements—everything that leads upward—never run themselves; they must be pushed every minute.

* * *

Human life is the Parable of the Prodigal Son. We leave the Father's House of Wisdom to see the world. Down the Great White Way of Artificial Life go the million prodigals, all seeking happiness. Their days fill up with emptiness and disappointment, their lives fill up with husks. Then as they are bumped they think upon their ways. Whenever anybody can be induced to think upon his ways he will see the emptiness of any life that is not growing in Wisdom and Strength, and arise and go back to his Father's House.

The devil is so busy with rattleboxes and razzledazzle, to keep people doped so that they will not think upon their ways. If you can't get a person to thinking, you can't help him. And it's mighty hard to get a young person to think. They know better. They are "naturally bright" and they can avoid the pitfalls and bumps that have wrecked the millions. They just have to get their coffeepots. They just have to slide along amused and doped every minute.

So the Needless Knocks must come, and either knock them back to the right or knock

them out of existence. How often we write into resolutions of respect, "Whereas, it has pleased an Allwise Providence to remove," when Providence didn't have anything at all to do with it. He was just knocked out.

There's so much suicide charged up to Providence!

* * *

The Needful Knocks

BUT all of us have had bumps that we didn't bump into. They came bumping into us. Some of them almost crushed us. They gave us cruel pain, and perhaps we haven't gotten over them yet. Some day we shall see, if we haven't already seen, that they were Needful Knocks. We needed them, because everything has to be pounded before it fits, and you and I are being fitted with these Needful Knocks.

One day I was up the Missabe road about a hundred miles north of Duluth, Minnesota, and came to a hole in the ground. It was a big hole—about half-a-mile of hole. There were steam-shovels at work throwing out of the hole what I thought was red mud. I

asked the man on the bank, "Kind sir, what is this red mud?"

The man on the bank was a native and properly insulted. "That hain't red mud; that's iron ore, an' it's the best iron ore in the world."

"What is that iron ore worth?"

"It hain't worth nothin' here. That's the reason we're movin' it."

Wasn't that good? There's red mud around every community that "hain't worth nothin'," and you'd do it a favor to move it. Send it to college, for instance!

Not very long after this, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, I saw this same red mud. It had been moved over the Great Lakes and over the rails to what they call a blast furnace, but the technological name is The College of Needful Knocks for Red Mud.

I saw the red mud matriculate—saw it matriculate down into a big hopper with limestone and charcoal and other textbooks. Then they corked it up and school began. They roasted it. It's a great thing to be roasted. When it was done roasting they stopped.

They always stop roasting when we're done. If we are yet getting roasted, the probabilities are we are not yet done.

Then they pulled the plug out of the bottom of the college and had promotion exercises. The red mud squirted out into the sand. It wasn't red mud now, because it had been roasted. It was a freshman, pig iron, worth more money than red mud, because it had been roasted.

The pig iron that held out faithful went up into another department, a big teakettle thing, where it was roasted again, and now it came out a sophomore, steel, worth more money than pig iron.

The sophomore steel that held out faithful went into another department where, after they roasted it, they rolled it out thin into a junior.

Some of it went on farther and had so much more trouble and affliction. The red mud didn't ask to be taken out of the hole in the ground. They just came and took it. They went on day after day bumping it and roasting it. They slapped it, they stamped upon

it, they twisted it, fashioned it, formed it. They hurt its feelings. They insulted it!

I hear that red mud crying out, "O, help! help! They're killing me! I can't stand this trouble! Why did they take me from my happy hole-in-the-ground? I have been good and honest, and yet they pound me and afflict me and break my heart. O, I'll never get over this. They'll never know me back in the hole in the ground."

But after that they gave it a diploma—a price-mark telling how much it had been bumped. Nobody wanted the red mud as long as it lay there in the hole-in-the-ground.

Nobody wants a loafer!

But everybody wanted it after it had been bumped and roasted. They paid the most money for what had been bumped and roasted the most. Now they sent it all over the world. They hung it in glass cases, and the people said, "Isn't that fine. We must have some of that." If a ton of that red mud had become watch-springs or razor-blades, the price had gone up into hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Fellow sufferers, all of us have to be

bumped and roasted before we get into a glass case. The difference between the chunk of coal and the diamond is the Needful Knocks. There is no human diamond that has not been crystallized in the crucible of affliction. There is no great life that has not known the great crises of life.

Cheer up when the Needful Knocks come. Every bump is raising our price!

* * *

How the Mississippi Becomes the Father of Waters

GO BACK to Minnesota. There is a little silvery sheet of water they call Lake Itasca. There is a place where a little stream leaps out of the lake. "What is this little creek?" you ask Jim, who rows the boat.

"Creek!" snorts Jim. "That hain't no creek! That's the Mississippi River!"

The Mississippi River—the Father of Waters—that consumptive little streamlet! Better take it in at night; somebody'll steal it. So even the Father of Waters has to

start as a baby! Here we are where that little Mississippi goes wabbling out from his cradle as unsteady as a calf on his new legs. He doesn't know where he is going, but he is "on the way."

He wabbles around over counties until he comes to the place where you and I come sooner or later. It is the place where Saul came on the road to Damascus. It is the place of the Heavenly Vision, or the Grand Bump. The place where we know which way we are to go. If you haven't heard the call, keep your ear to the receiver and you will hear it. Here gravity calls to the Missippi, "O, little stream wandering thru Minnesota, do you want to grow? Then you'll have to come south. Do you want to become the Father of Waters? Then you'll have to come south."

The little stream listens, then starts south. You never meet him after that but what he is going south. You never meet him but what he says, "Excuse me, but I cannot stop —I must keep on going south."

He doesn't branch out.

He specializes on going south. He has just one business in life, Going South.

He starts out in North Minnesota just like a boy or girl who gets the vision and call to do something. "Good bye, folks, I'm going south." And you can almost hear the wise men on the store-boxes saying, "Why, Mississippi, you hain't got water enough to get out of the county. You stay where you are. We know your folks." "Is not this the carpenter's son?"

But the Mississippi doesn't try to get out of the county; he just tries to get south. He hasn't much water, but he doesn't wait for a relative to die and leave him some water. He starts with what water he has. He doesn't know it is fifteen hundred miles to the gulf. You and I don't know how far it is to our goal. I'm so glad of that—so glad we don't know the struggles and the bumps coming. But there is just one thing we can know—the direction.

And we all have enough water to start!

The Mississippi meets a stream the very first day. He picks up the stream and has some more water. He's a little bigger now

and farther south. Next day he picks up another stream and makes it Mississippi. So he goes on south picking up brooklets, streamlets and rivulets. Business is picking up!

Every day he grows as he goes south. Presently you can hear the same wise men back on the store-boxes saying, "I always told you that Mississippi would get there!"

You always hear that after you begin to succeed. You always hear them saying you were somehow born lucky. The home town is the slowest to credit you with success, but after the outside world has labeled you a success, the home town overcredits you.

Generally you are dead about a hundred years before the home town band plays for you.

Aren't you glad the Mississippi went south? Had he gone any other direction he would have been lost in the woods.

* * *

The Mississippi gets to Minneapolis and St. Paul. Here are the Twin Cities that ought to meet the Mississippi with a brass band, because the river has made them about

all the prosperity they have—has furnished the power for the greatest flour mills in the world. But the Twin Cities do to the Mississippi just what human beings do to you and to me.

Have you noticed it? The folks we help the most are generally the least grateful in return.

Don't wait to be thanked. Hurry on to avoid the kick!

Do good to others because it makes you happy. But don't wait for a receipt. You'll need a poultice every time you wait. I know, for I've waited.

Do good from principle. Don't expect to be thanked any more than the sun expects to be thanked for shining.

How easy to say, but O, how hard to do!

Minneapolis and St. Paul meet their benefactor with bricks. They hit him with tomato cans. They throw all their junk, their rag-tag and bob-tail—every old thing they don't want, down on the Mississippi.

The Mississippi doesn't resign!

The Mississippi doesn't tell a tale of woe. He doesn't say, "I'm not appreciated. My

genius isn't understood. I'm not going to play. I'm not going a step farther. I'm going right back to Lake Itasca."

No—he doesn't even go to live with his father-in-law!

He says, "Thank you, Twin Cities, send it all along; every little helps." If you go a few miles below Minneapolis and St. Paul, you'll see a miracle. You'll see how the Mississippi takes over all this discouragement, defilement and poison. He purifies it, he clarifies it, thru some mysterious alchemy of nature. He makes it a part of himself—and he is Greater and Farther South!

* * *

It's by Going South and Overcoming

Ah, stream from Itasca, I discover your secret of success. I discover how you become the Father of Waters. You keep on going south. Civilization conspires to defeat you. Chicago's drainage canal pollutes you. The flat, lazy Platte, three miles wide and three inches deep; the peevish, bridge-hungry Kaw, and all the other queer streams that unite to form that treacherous, irrespon-

sible lower Missouri—all these pour over you. The big muddy Ohio besmirches you. The red floods, the blue floods, the brown floods, the black floods all try to defile you. But you take them over day by day, you purify them, you make them a part of you, and every night you are Greater and Farther South!

Nothing can discourage you, defile you, nor divert you. They build a great dam at Keokuk. But you only rise the higher and sweep over it, and that very struggle of overcoming sends the electric thrill of power and light all up and down the valley.

Power comes from overcoming resistance.

One day the train stopped in Louisiana. We had come to a river so great science hasn't been able to put a bridge across. We had to stack up our train on a ferry-boat to cross the Mississippi River.

Looking down into that lordly stream, now a good mile wide, hurrying to his long home in the gulf near at hand, there came a great thrill. I could shut my eyes and see the little stream in Minnesota struggling southward.

O, Father of Waters, you have fought a good fight! You have conquered gloriously! You bear on your bosom the commerce of many nations. I know why. Far back in Minnesota you got in the right channel, you learned the lessons of the knocks, and you never stopped Going South.

And I see how our lives may become great and successful. We must get the vision of direction, we must press southward day by day. And the countless streams of influence that pour over us, the good and the bad, need not defile, divert nor discourage. We must overcome them, take them over, make them a part of ourselves, and thus grow stronger!

* * *

All the promises of God are "To him that overcometh." All the kingdoms of earth and heaven and the fullness thereof are to the overcomer!

There's not a crumb promised to the loafer, the shirker or the coward.

Go on South! Everyone of us is planned to be a Mississippi. But most of us stop in the Minnesota woods, or in the Twin Cities, or at Keokuk.

II

How to Become Great

ONE DAY the train stopped at a station to take water. Beside the track was a grocery store with a row of barrels of apples in front. There was one barrel full of big, red, fat apples. I rushed over and got a sack of the big, red, fat apples. Later on as the train was under way I looked in the sack and there wasn't a big, red, fat apple in the sack. All I could figure out was there was only one layer of the big, red, fat apples on the top of the barrel, and the groceryman, not desiring to spoil his sign, had reached down under the top layer.

Anyhow, he gave me the worst mess of runts and windfalls I ever saw in one sack. The things I said about the grocery business must have kept the recording angel busy!

Then I calmed down. Did the groceryman do that on purpose? Does the groceryman ever put the big apples on top and the little ones down underneath? Do you? Is there a groceryman in this audience?

O, man of sorrows! How you have been slandered! It never occurred to me until that moment, the groceryman doesn't put the big ones on top and the little ones underneath, because he doesn't have to. It does itself. It is the Shaking of the Barrel.

I remembered when I used to have big marbles and little marbles in my box. The big ones always shook to the top and the little ones shook to the bottom. I always noticed when big and little objects shook together, there was no mistake—the big shook up and the little shook down. Once a pike contractor in our home county forgot this. His contract called for the road to be made of small stones, but he got in a hurry and put big stones in the bottom of the road, and covered them over with little ones on the top. Before he could collect his money, the big stones were sticking their noses right up thru the top. And he didn't collect at all.

You little folks try that tomorrow. You put big marbles and little marbles together and shake them and see the big go up and the little go down.

* * *

I remembered when I used to haul apples to the cider-mill in the old dump-bed wagon. I didn't sort out the apples; I just threw them in any old way, and then drove four miles and a half over corduroy roads.

Do you remember about corduroy roads? O, poetry of motion! The wagon only "hit the high spots" as it bumped from log to log, and the apples were in the air most of the time.

And when I got to the cider-mill, it seemed as tho the big, fat apples were trying to get to the top and the runts were trying to hold a mass meeting in the bottom of the wagon-bed.

The big ones had the good luck and the runts had the bad luck. The same bump was both good luck and bad luck—it depended upon the size of the apple. The same bump that sent the little one down, sent the big one up. It didn't depend upon the size of the bump, but upon the size of the bump-ee!

Here were two apples right side by side—maybe brothers, a big brother and a little runt brother. They got the same bump.

Little brother had bad luck and shook down, while big brother had good luck and shook up.

O, little apple, I'm sorry for you. But it's your own fault. Why don't you grow bigger? You little runt, growling about you "never had no chance" and "folks never used me right," you grow bigger. Get the lid off and begin to get more capable. And pretty soon the very bumps that used to be bad luck and push you down, will become good luck and push you up.

* * *

We Make Our Own Places

O FELLOW APPLES! We are all apples in this great barrel of life, on the way to the market-place of the future. It's a corduroy road. Every day we shake about and get bumped. All life is a struggle to stay—a survival of the fittest. Every place is shaking—the postoffice, the pulpits, the schoolrooms, the stores, the shops, the offices. Anyone holding a place must fill it or he cannot stay there. If he does not fill it, he will rattle.

Nobody can stay where he rattles. He will shake down to a smaller place.

If he grows greater than the place, he will shake up to a greater place, or push out greater the place he is in, which is the same thing.

Here is all humanity in the barrel—big apples, little apples, freckled apples, speckled apples, green apples—and dried apples!

We are not the victims of a blind fate, nor creatures of chance. We have in our own hands the power to decide our destiny, as we grow or refuse to grow.

Some of us begin life on the top branches, right in the sunshine of popular favor, and get our names in the blue book at the start. Some of us begin down in the shade on the bottom branches, and we don't even "get invited." We often get discouraged as we look up to the top branches, and we say, "O, if I only had his chance! If I were only up there, I might amount to something. I'm too low down."

But we can grow!

After while we are all in the same barrel, shaken up and bumped about. There the

people do not ask us, "On what branch of that tree did you grow?" so much as they inquire, "How big are you?"

* * *

The One Who Shakes Up

Everywhere you look, in every community, in every business, you see the barrel sorting people according to size.

There is a city concern where a number of young ladies worked. Some of them had been there two years. There came a raw, green Dutch girl from the country. It was her first city office experience, and of course she got the bottom job. The other girls sneered at her. "Isn't she the limit?" they would say. They were right. She made so many blunders. But she didn't make the same blunder twice. Every time she was bumped she learned the lesson.

And she never "got done." When she had finished the work she had been put at, she could always see some other work that needed to be done, and she would go ahead and do it without being told. She had that rare faculty the world is bidding for—initia-

tive. The other girls "got done." That is, when they had finished the work they had been put at, they would wait—O, so patiently they would wait—to be told what to do next.

Their heads were "fat." Sometimes I think a "fathead" is really worse than a "bonehead." Pardon this expression from the diamond.

In three months time every other girl in that office was asking questions of the little Dutch girl. She had learned more about the business in three months than the others had learned in two years. That is, she had grown greater than the others. The barrel did the rest. She shook above them. Today the little Dutch girl is giving orders to all the rest, for she is the superintendent of that office.

The other girls feel hurt about it. They will tell you, "There was nothing fair about that—nothing fair. Jennie ought to have had that job. Jennie had been here two years!"

But Jennie hadn't grown as great as "Dutchie"!

* * *

The One Who Shakes Down

I stood in a paper-mill the other day, beside a long machine making shiny supercalendered paper. I asked the man working there some questions about the machine, which he answered fairly well. Then I asked him about a machine in the next room. He said, "I don't know anything about it, boss, I don't work there."

I asked him about another machine, and he replied, "I don't know anything about it, boss, I don't work there." When I asked him about the pulp mill in another building, he replied, "I don't know anything about it, boss, I don't work there."

"How long have you worked here?"

"About twelve years."

Going out of the building, I asked the foreman, "Brother, do you see that man over there at the supercalendered machine? Is he a human being? What's the matter with him?"

The foreman's face clouded. "I hate to talk to you about that man. He is one of the kindest-hearted men we ever had in this plant, and I just hate to tell him the thing

I've got to tell him. You see he doesn't learn anything—doesn't try to learn, doesn't seem to care whether he learns or not, and we're afraid he'll break the machine he works at. We must let him go."

For he had begun to rattle. Nobody can stay where he rattles.

* * *

Now life is mainly routine. You and I and everybody must go on doing pretty much the same things over and over and over. Every day we have about the same round of duties. But if we go on doing just the same things in the same way over and over—just turning round and round in our places and not growing any, pretty soon we'll shrivel some and rattle.

We must be learning and growing to hold our place. The farmer must be getting a new vision of farming year by year, or he can't hold his place as a farmer. The merchant must be learning something new about merchandising. The mother must be getting a wider vision of homemaking. The preacher must be getting new visions or he cannot stand in his pulpit.

So we must keep on growing to stay the same size! Evaporation is going on all the time.

When anybody stays in the same place year after year, he doesn't rattle.

We never get done going south. Children, when you go off to college, don't get the idea you are going to a "finishing school," or you'll be finished.

When I hear anybody say, "You can't tell me anything about it; I know all there is to know about it," I know he rattles. When I hear anybody say, "I own the job; they just can't get along without me," poor fellow! I know he is rattling and going to shake down.

We must grow or go!

* * *

You Must First Grow Great

We young people come up into life and want great places. I wouldn't give much for a young person who doesn't want a great place. I wouldn't give much for a young person who isn't full of ambition and hustle.

We think the way to get a great place is

just to get it. Go after it and get it! If we don't have pull enough, get some more testimonials. We think if we could only get into a great place, we'd be great. But we wouldn't; we'd be a great joke! For we'd rattle.

We don't become great by getting into a great place any more than a boy becomes a man by putting on his father's boots. He rattles in the boots. He must grow greater feet before he gets greater boots. But he must get the feet before the boots!

No—we become great before we get the great place. As we become great, the barrel shakes us up to the place we fit. The place is only the label indicating our size.

Beware of testimonials! The man who has the most testimonials generally needs them the most. A testimonial is a crutch.

The little man tries to get the great place by getting testimonials. Many a man writes a testimonial to get rid of somebody. As he goes away with it, the writer says, "Well, I hope it will do him some good." It is dangerous, for the higher you boost a little man, the farther he is going to fall. It may break

his neck, and writing that testimonial would be murder.

No, children, as you come up into life, don't worry so much about places. Try to get ready for places. They'll come to you just as fast as you are ready for them. You get the vision of what you are to do. You keep working and listening for the call, "Come south!" Then you go south! Get into the first place that opens on the way south, no matter if it is a knothole. Get into the knothole. Then get too great for the knothole. That doesn't mean get too big-feeling, but it means doing more than you are paid to do, knowing more than you are paid to know in a knothole, and you simply cannot stay in the knothole. The barrel will shake you up into a bigger knothole. And on up just as fast as you grow great.

Don't worry about salary. Salary will take care of itself. Nobody can be long overpaid, nor long underpaid.

Our real pay is gotten out of our work, not out of our envelope.

How successful we are always means how happy we are.

* * *

You Get It When You Get Ready

O, why didn't they make me see that back in the days when "Nobody used me right! Nobody'd give me a chance"?

I used to carry a dinner-pail past Bill Barlow's bank. I was working on the "section" for a dollar fifteen a day, and I rattled there. I didn't earn my wages. I watched the clock and left my pick up in the air when the whistle blew. I would look up into the big bank and see the mahogany furniture, and growl, "I ought to have that bank. I'm naturally bright. Everybody's trying to keep a brilliant young man down! If the rich wasn't getting richer and the poor poorer, I'd be running that bank."

Did you ever hear that line of conversation? It generally comes from somebody who rattles where he is.

I do not mean that the bank job was any greater than the handcar job. But when I was not faithful over a few things I would have rattled over many.

I look back now in gratitude to realize I didn't get the bank. Suppose I'd had my foolish wish, as the fairy books love to tell

about—love to tell about a clodhopper who is suddenly enchanted up into a king or something. Suppose they had put me up into the president's chair of that bank—into a great place that was shaking all the time, where I would have rattled. I wouldn't have lasted fifteen minutes. I was a peanut and I would have rattled right down to the peanut row.

I look back over my life and I want to hold Thanksgiving services when I see that I didn't get the things I wanted at the time I wanted them. They would have been coffee-pots! Thank the Lord! we don't get a coffee-pot until we are ready to handle it.

Those dear folks who love to talk about leveling things and turning the barrel upside down, so as to give the little man a chance, should sit down and have a quiet think about this. The little man has the chance—just as fast as he grows greater. To turn the barrel upside down would put the little ones all on top and the big ones down in the bottom. But it wouldn't stop the barrel from shaking!

And there would be a great social earth-

quake that would send those little ones down and shake the big ones up, just as before.

You can't make apples of one size by act of Congress.

Quit trying to fix the barrel. Fix the people inside the barrel. Show them how to grow greater.

* * *

Today you and I have things we couldn't have yesterday. We just wanted them yesterday—O, how we wanted them! But a cruel fate wouldn't let us have them. Today we have them—they come to us just as naturally, and we see it is because we have gotten ready for them, and the barrel has carried us up to them.

Today you and I want things beyond our reach. We just want them—O, how we want them! But a cruel fate won't let us have them.

That cruel fate is our own smallness. We are not big enough. Grow greater and we get them. We have today all we can stand today. More would wreck us.

"No good thing will He withhold from

them" that grow great enough. (Revised version!)

* * *

Moses was Eighty Years Preparing

LIFE IS Preparation, not Pursuit. You see the man pursuing hardest? By and by he will wail, "They beat me to it!" We don't have to pursue. We just have to prepare for things, and as fast as we prepare for things, the things come to us and say, "Here we are; please have us."

No great thing was ever done, save by great preparation.

Moses was eighty years old before he began his real job. Moses was eighty years getting ready to do that last forty years work. Eighty years getting ready to be Moses.

Jesus was thirty years getting ready to do three years work. Thirty years getting ready to be Jesus.

Most of us today expect to get ready in about four easy lessons by mail!

We can be a pumpkin in one summer—with the accent on the punk!

If we can't wait that long, cheer up, we can be a mushroom in a day. R-r-r-r-t! We're a mushroom—with the accent on the mush!

We can't be an oak that way. When we stop growing we stop living.

* * *

That story of Moses thrills me. I see Moses the little Hebrew babe in the bulrushes. I see Pharaoh's daughter come down to these same bulrushes. "O-o-o-oo-oo!" says Miss Phyllis Pharaoh, "here is Moses! Well, little tootsie wootsie, get into my limousine!"

I see them take little Moses out of the bulrushes into luxury. They give him a "bawth," they pour perfumery over him, they feed him Mellin's Food, they dress him in a cute little Lord Fauntleroy rig. Well, well, Moses, you look just too cunning for anything! You are fixed for life. Nothing to do now but to loaf around palaces, look at the album, smoke cigarets with your initials on them and wear a wrist watch!

If Moses had stayed around the palaces,

he would have made a fine, fat mummy. All the rest of the palace people went to mummies. And Moses would have been the seventeenth mummy on the thirty-ninth shelf to the right, section Q!

Moses took off his tuxedo in time. He kept on going south. He left the riot and the debauchery of the palace. He went out into the desert to the University of Hard Knocks. It took eighty years to get the meanness and selfishness and murder pounded out of him so that he could lead the Children of Israel thru the Wilderness. He had to cross the Red Sea and go up Sinai, and fight his way year by year before he stood upon Nebo, the great lawgiver we revere.

* * *

We are Just Beginning!

Most of us die in the Wilderness—tickled to death with our press notices!

We make a little first reader success—some little knee-pants achievement—and our friends crowd around to congratulate us. They tell us we have arrived. We believe them!

We think we have arrived at the Gulf of Mexico, when we haven't gotten out of the woods of Minnesota. We stop going south and get embalmed. The world is just littered up with mummies who strut and squeak, "I'm a success. Do you not see I am a success? Why don't you shout for me? Here are my press notices."

Success is so hard to endure. We can endure ten defeats better than one victory.

And we can protect ourselves fairly well from our enemies, but heaven deliver us from our fool friends!

Generally speaking, the man who confesses that he is a success, isn't a success.

The man who is a success will tell you of the success he hopes for tomorrow.

Contentment with present achievement is sleeping sickness. There are two kinds of people in the world—Educated People and Fools. The Fools are the folks who have graduated. And quit!

The other day I saw in a music store the new Edison phonograph. I remembered when a boy back in the seventies I had seen

the first phonograph—that tinfoil cylinder that screeched, scratched and stuttered. You wouldn't have it in your barn today to play to your "Ford". But the world said, "Wonderful! Wonderful! Mr. Edison has succeeded!" Everybody believed Mr. Edison had succeeded, save one man.

His name WAS Thomas A. Edison. He hadn't gotten to St. Paul in his going south. He went on succeeding. He went on working day and night. He went on making thousands of experiments. Today when he has become one of the world's greatest inventors, if we could bring him to this platform and ask him, "Wizard of Menlo Park, have you succeeded?" I am sure he would say, "My friends, I am only just beginning to do the things I hope yet to do. Everything I do today only lifts me higher to see how much more there is to be done tomorrow."

The oldest person in every audience (if he be living and not vegetating) is readiest to admit, "I am just beginning to learn."

The farther you travel thru life, the more

you want to say with Newton after he h: written the world a new science, "I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore * * * whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me!"

Nothing is ever perfected; it is just evolving.

The only successful man is the one who never gets done succeeding.

* * *

We Bury Ourselves

Observe that Moses was eighty years getting ready for his job. His job was ready and waiting for him all these eighty years. All these eighty years the Children of Israel were groaning for a Moses. But Moses wasn't great enough.

You and I don't have to hunt for our job. It is ready for us, waiting for us, waiting for us to get great enough to do it. Everybody has a great job waiting, but so few of us keep on going south till we reach it.

If Moses had "retired" at seventy-nine, we would never have heard about him.

I wish I could impress upon you that all

we have done up to today is just preparation for today. You and I are only children in God's great kindergarten, just learning our letters of life. It isn't hard to make these boys and girls believe that they are just beginning. But it is so hard to make us older boys and girls believe this. Our hair begins to get frosty or begins to wear off in spots, and we begin to say, "I am getting old."

And then we do get old. We age rapidly after that. Advertising gets results. We are exactly as old as we think. Age isn't birthdays; it is grunts.

We quit work and fold our hands. We say, "I've seen my best days." And we push forward the date of our funeral.

Every time we say, "My work is done," the undertaker greases his wagon.

* * *

Imagine Moses living today amidst the din of the high school orations on "The Age of the Young Man" and the Ostler idea that you are going downhill at fifty. Moses is eighty years old when he first gets into the newspapers. He is "living on borrowed

time" when he puts himself at the head of the host of Israel.

I see his scandalized friends gather around him. "Moses! Moses! what is this we hear? You going to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land? Why, Moses, you are an old man. Why don't you act like an old man? You are liable to drop off any minute! Here is a pair of slippers. And keep out of the night air. It's so hard on old folks."

I hear Moses say, "No! No! I am just beginning. Watch things happen from now on. My chance has just come. Children of Israel, forward, march!"

I see Moses at eighty starting for the Wilderness so fast Aaron can hardly keep up.

Moses is eighty-five, and busier and more enthusiastic than ever. The people say, "Isn't Moses dead?" They reply, "No." "Well, why isn't he dead? He ought to be dead this minute."

They appoint a committee to bury Moses. You can't do anything in America without a committee. The committee gets out the invi-

tations and makes all the arrangements for a gorgeous funeral next Thursday. They get the resolutions of respect—"Whereas—Whereas—Resolved—Resolved."

Then the committee waits on Moses. That's the job of every committee—to "wait" on something or other.

The committee goes up to General Moses' private office. It is his busy day. They have to stand in line and wait their turn. When they get up to Moses' desk, Moses says, "Boys, what is it, but cut it short, I'm very busy."

The committee commences to weep. "Why, General Moses, you don't understand. You are eighty-five years old and ought to be buried. We are the committee duly authorized to give you gorgeous burial. The funeral is to be next Thursday. Kindly die!"

I see Moses look over his appointments. "Next Thursday? Why, boys, every hour is taken next Thursday. I simply can't attend!"

And they couldn't bury Moses. He

wouldn't attend. You can't bury anybody who is too busy to attend his own funeral. You can't bury anybody until he consents. It is bad manners!

The committee is so mortified. It had gotten all the invitations out for Moses' funeral and Moses wouldn't attend! Did you ever see the perversity and lack of appreciation of a man like Moses?

The committee waited. That's the job of a committee—to wait!

Moses is eighty-six and busier than ever. The committee says, "Moses, can you attend next Thursday?" And Moses says, "No, boys, I'm so busy I haven't time even to think about getting sick. You'll have to wait."

The committee waits. Moses is ninety, and rushed harder than ever. He is doing ten men's work and his friends all say he is killing himself. But he makes the committee wait.

Moses is ninety-five. Moses is a hundred. And the committee dies!

Moses goes right on shouting, "Onward!"

"Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward." He is a hundred and ten. He is a hundred and twenty. Even then I read that "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." He hadn't time to stop and abate them.

And God had to bury him. The committee was dead!

O, friends, this isn't irreverence. It is joyful reverence. It is the message to you and me: Get so busy and enthused in our work, see the greater things yet to be done, and we'll fool the "committee", and God will have to bury us, too. Then the resolutions of respect will come true—"Whereas, it has pleased an Allwise Providence to remove us," and we'll quit committing suicide and charging it up to Providence.

* * *

The Secret of Greatness

DON'T MAKE the world's mistake of thinking that the top of the barrel always means getting to the top in worldly honors. Don't think becoming greatest means getting the greatest pile of

material things. Don't think only a few can become greatest. It is everybody's privilege—no, everybody's duty—to become greatest.

I turn back to the book I used to sneer at —the book that the worldly-wise builders have always rejected, but it must become the head-stone of the corner in every abiding structure. Here I find the answer to every question.

Jesus had a couple of disciples—those Zebedee boys. They wanted to be great. James wanted to be secretary of state, and John wanted to be postmaster general, or something like that. They got very busy pursuing greatness, but they did not prepare for greatness. They got their mother out electioneering for them.

They came to the Master. "O, Master, we want the great jobs in your coming kingdom. We want to sit on either side of you on your throne. See! we have the home endorsement!"

Then the Master said, "O, boys, you rattle!" That is the Revised Version. According to King James he said, "Can you drink

of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" That is saying the same thing. They hadn't gotten ready for such greatness.

And then he said a wonderful thing: "Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

Do you believe that?

Whether you are really living and happy and successful, and strong and great and educated, depends upon whether you accept or reject that statement of the Wisest Man.

These two thousand years the world has mainly rejected it. The world goes frantically on trying to be great by being greatly served. The world tries to get a great salary, and get great power and a retinue of servants. Then after the world gets it all, it cries out in bitter disappointment, "All is vanity!"

Greatness is not in Getting, but in Giving.

Greatness merely means the ability to carry great loads and to bear great burdens. Greatness means giving great service.

* * *

How All Become Greatest

When the widow came casting her two mites into the treasury, the Master said as he pointed to the rich men who had cast gifts into the same treasury, "This poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."

Here is the statement that when we have given all we have, nobody can give more.

Every one of us has a coin of talent—rich gifts, perhaps, but at least some little mite of a talent. Maybe just a talent for peeling potatoes, or driving nails, or ruling a nation. It matters not what our job, just so it be our work—the thing we can do.

When we have developed our talent to the highest possible efficiency—when we do with all our might what our hands find to do—when we are giving the greatest possible service out of our lives, We have become Greatest, by the divine definition.

There is no greater success, nor greater happiness, nor greater eminence, than just to be permitted (not compelled) to serve at

the work we are best fitted to do.

That is the top of the barrel!

Quit fretting and worrying about the things you cannot get to do. Do the things with your might that you can get to do. Ruling or serving, it is all one.

I am learning to take off my hat to anybody who can do anything greatly. I don't know who fitted the boards in this floor, nor do I know all the great people who may come and stand upon this floor. But I do know that the one who made the floor is just as great as anybody in the world who can come and stand upon it—if Each be doing his work with the same Zeal and Faithfulness and Capability.

You thought when I was talking about the barrel shaking and the big ones going to the top, that I was sneering at the little man! Don't you see the only little man in the world is the man who won't serve?

Don't you see that all the promises in God's Word are for "him who overcometh?" Not one crumb for the loafer, the shirker, the selfish one.

The world says some of us have golden

gifts, some silver gifts, but most of us have copper gifts. Yet when we have given all we have, there is a divine alchemy that transmutes every gift into gold. Everything becomes gold when given in a golden manner. Every work is drudgery when done selfishly. Every work becomes great and glorious when we put into it a great and glorious life.

* * *

Happiness the Pay for Service

Have you ever been unhappy? I have. I have been so unhappy I wanted to die. I have been so unhappy I wanted to kill myself. I think I would have killed myself a great many times, but I was too big a coward! My life was such a failure. Nobody wanted me. The world seemed to want everybody else, but the world wouldn't have me.

Now I walk thru the same streets singing where once I went swearing. I marvel today how well the world uses me.

I had to get many, many bumps before I could see that I was trying to become great

backwards. I was trying to get things selfishly and beat everybody to them. All I got was bumps and coffee-pots. I never knew one moment of real happiness until I turned around and tried to give some service out of my life.

Grow greater and your troubles grow smaller!

Are you unhappy in your work? Then you are working selfishly. And you'll have to get your bumps and coffee-pots to teach you you are going backwards.

You'll have to learn that greatness is not Getting but Giving.

You'll have to learn that the Service of God is the Service of Man.

* * *

Only One Business

Then hear the conclusion of the whole matter: There is only one business in the world —"My Father's Business," as the child Jesus said in the temple. That is the Business of Being Happy. The business of making the kingdom of heaven appear on earth. The business of answering our daily prayer,

"Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven."

The pay for this business is not money but Happiness. We get it as we make others happy by lovingly serving them.

Keeping a grocery, teaching school, running a home, a bank, a farm or a factory—it's all one business of Service, and we are doing the part our talents determine.

He that saveth his life shall lose it. But he that loseth his life in service shall find it grown great and glorious and happy.

If you want to be great, don't go to Chicago or New York or chasing around the world to find it. Go back to your home—right back into your kitchen, or into your shop or your office and simply lose yourself in the service of others. Make your old work luminous with a new devotion. Presently you will find yourself upon a new throne of power; you will find the people rising up to call you blessed, and you will find that peace that passeth understanding.

* * *

We get all the Good things of Life in the

School of Service. Here we get Wisdom, Understanding, Happiness, Manhood, Womanhood, Greatness.

Getting these is getting an Education. All the rest is scaffolding.

* * *

Finding the Great People

If I were making a roster of the great people in this community, I would not go first to the show places nor to the blue book. I would go to the firing-line, and where the burdens are heaviest.

I had to go to the shaft of a coal-mine in a little Illinois town the other day. The bureau had sent me there to lecture. I wondered what the grimy-faced man who came from the shaft wearing a miner's lamp in his cap, could possibly have to do with the lyceum course. But I learned he had sold all the tickets. That man is the superintendent of the one Sunday school in the town. That man is the storm-center of every altruistic effort in the town—the greatest man there, because the most serviceable, tho he works every day full time with his pick.

* * *

Chicago has a great man who preaches on Sundays to thousands. He writes books and runs a college. He is at the head of so many uplift movements that his name gets into the papers about every day, and you read it in almost every committee doing good things in Chicago.

He broke away from Chicago last summer to have a vacation at the chautauquas. Many people think that a vacation means going off somewhere and stretching under a tree or jumping into some sort of oblivion. But this Chicago great man went from one chautauqua town to another, and took his vacation going up and down the streets. He dug into the local history of each place, and before dinner knew more about the place than most of the natives. "There's a sermon for me," he would exclaim every half-hour. He went to see people who were doing things. In every town he would discover somebody of unusual attainment, and he would visit him. He made every town an unusual town. He turned the humdrum travel map into a wonderland. He scolded lazy towns and praised enterprising towns. He stopped young fel-

lows on the street. "What are you going to do in life?" Perhaps the young man would say he had no chance. "You come to Chicago, and I'll give you a chance."

So this Chicago man was busy every day, working overtime on his vacation. He was busy about other people's business. He did not once ask the price of land, or where there was a good investment for himself, but every day he was trying to make an investment in somebody else.

Ever so many of his friends worried about him. They would say, "Why doesn't he take care of himself? He just wears himself out for other people until he hasn't strength enough left to lecture and do his own work." Sometimes they were right.

* * *

But he that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life in service finds it returning to him great and glorious. This man's preaching did not make him great. His college did not make him great. His books did not make him great. His life of

service makes him great—makes his preaching, his college, his books great.

This Chicago man gives his whole energy into service, and it becomes the fuel that makes the steam to accomplish all the wonderful things he does. Let him stop and "take care of himself," and his career would stop. If he had begun life by "taking care of himself," and "looking out for number one," and stipulating every cent he was to get, and writing it all down in advance in the contract, most likely Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus would have remained a struggling, discouraged preacher in the backwoods of Morrow county, Ohio.

* * *

Gunsaulus often says: "You are planning and saving and telling yourself that afterwhile you can give and do great things. You are wrong. Give it now. Give your dollar now rather than your thousands afterwhile. You need to give it now, and the world needs to get it now."

III

Service Completes Our Education

THERE IS a factory town in the East. Not a pretty town, but just a great, dirty mill and a lot of little dirty houses around the mill. The hands lived in the little dirty houses and worked six days of the week in the big, dirty mill. On Sunday they didn't work, because this mill didn't run on Sunday. They went to the factory church. After preaching there would be "class-meeting," and about halfway thru the preacher would say, "We'll now change the order of the services." That meant get up and speak, if you had "religion." Always there was a little old, dried-up man on the front seat who would get up first.

Perhaps you would have laughed if you had never seen him before. He was dried-up and shriveled; one shoulder higher than the other and his head upside down—the smooth end of his head was on top.

This little old man would pop up first and say, "Brethern and sistern, I hain't got no

book l'arnin' like the rest of you." He always said that. Every Sunday he would break the news to the congregation that he had no "book l'arnin' like the rest of you." Then he would tell them things, wonderful things.

He was the man who owned the mill. He had made it with his own hands out of nothing. The "brethern and sistern" all worked for him six days a week. He had never had school advantages and he had an idolatry for a book.

* * *

Gussie and Bill Whackem

He had a little pink son, whose name was "F. Gustavus Adolphus." He often said, "I'm going to give that boy all the education my money can buy."

Thought he could buy an education—a thing you earn in service! The old man thought he could buy an education and give it to Gussie C. O. D.

The old man began to polish and sandpaper Gussie from the moment he could sit up in the cradle and notice things. He sent

him to the astrologer, the phrenologer and all the other "ologers" they had around there, and got him "ologized." When Gussie was old enough to export, he sent him to one of the greatest universities in America. The fault wasn't with the university, nor with Gussie, who was bright and lovable. The fault was with the old father. In the blindness of his love he robbed his boy of his birthright.

What is every child's birthright?

The opportunity of becoming great.

How do we become great?

The Master told how—by Service.

Gussie had no chance to serve. Everything was bought and handed to him on a silver platter. Gussie went thru that great university just as a steer from the plains of Texas goes thru Mr. Armour's Institute of Pack-nology in Chicago. You remember that in Packingtown, when the steer matriculates—when he gets the grand bump, said steer doesn't have to do another thing after that. His education is all arranged for in advance and he merely rides thru and receives it. There is a row of professors with

their sleeves rolled up who give him the degrees.

So as Mr. T. Steer of Panhandle goes riding thru on that trolley from the A-B-C of Packingtown to his eternal cold storage, each professor hits him a dab. He rides along from department to department until finally he is canned.

They canned Gussie.

Gussie had a man hired to study for him. He rode from department to department. They did their level best from the outside—upholstered him, enameled him, manicured him, sugar-cured him, embalmed him. Gussie was done and the paint dry.

He was a thing of beauty!

* * *

Mill Closes Down Three Times

Gussie came back home with his education in the baggage-car. The mill shut down on a week day, the first time in its history. The hands all marched down to the train, and when the young lord alighted, the factory band played, "See! the Conquering Hero Comes!"

A few years later the mill again shut down on a week day. They had crape on the office door. Men and women stood on the streets weeping. The little old father to the community had been translated. When they opened the mill after that, F. Gustavus Adolphus, who had inherited the plant, sat in the office where the old man had sat so long.

He sat in a great place, made by a great life of service. It was shaking and Gussie rattled, for he was not great.

You can't stay where you rattle—not even if you own the place. In two years and seven months the mill was a wreck, under the boy with all the advantages the old man hadn't had.

The mill was shut down the third time on a week day. It looked like it wouldn't open again, for there wasn't much left to open. But it did open, and with a new kind of a boss.

If I were to give that new boss a descriptive name, I certainly would call him Bill Whackem. He was an orphan. He hadn't any chance. He had a new black eye almost

every day. But he just seemed to fatten on bumps. Every time Bill got a bump he would swell up. Anybody who swells up—in efficiency, goes up. The barrel shakes him up.

Bill Whackem became the most useful and serviceable man in the community. People forgot all about Bill's lowly origin. They got to looking to Bill to start and run things. By the divine definition, Bill went to the top. So when the courts were looking for somebody to handle the wreck of the mill, it wasn't any accident that led them to appoint Hon. William Whackem receiver for it.

It was Bill who put the wreckage together, made the wheels go round and put that hungry town back to work.

* * *

Hard Knocks Graduates

This does not argue against the book or the college. I have not come to attack books and colleges, but to defend them. Books and colleges suffer at the hands of their friends. They say to the book and college, "Give us

an education." They are just as thoughtless as the unthinking ones who say, "The college made a fool out of Gussie."

You can't get an education from a book or a college. You can only get the tools, perhaps the best tools in the world. After you get them you must go out into the School of Service and achieve your education.

In every community there are Hard Knocks graduates—people who have made a success of life without books. They achieved it with some poor, homemade tools. Every time they try to hit the big lick they feel the lack of the early training and the more efficient equipment. That is why they say to young people, "All my life I have been handicapped from lack of proper preparation. Don't make my mistake—go to school."

They are like the man here and there who is an electrical genius and you see him with crude apparatus doing really remarkable things. But how much more that same genius would accomplish with a full Westinghouse equipment.

* * *

The Tragedy of America

THE STORY of Gussie and Bill Whackem is being written in every community in tears, failure and heartache. It is the Tragedy of American Civilization. In every community there are fathers and mothers saying, "We haven't had much chance in our lives. But please God, our children are going to have every chance we can give them."

So they toil and save; they get great farms, fine homes, big bank accounts. Not for themselves, but for their children. This is right. Give the children all you can, if you want to do it. Make them the greatest place you possibly can make.

But remember the barrel shakes.

Remember every place is shaking.

If you make a great place for your child, you must see to it that the child becomes just as great as the place.

Else the child will rattle, will get its bumps, will possibly make wreck of it all.

Then remember, the child will get the blame for making the wreck, when the child

is the helpless victim. Gussie was blamed for wrecking his father's mill.

If you make a great place for your child and do not see to it that the child becomes as great as the place it is to occupy, you have cruelly robbed your child of its birthright.

And seven out of ten parents all over this land are doing it!

A man heard me telling the story of Gussie and Bill Whackem and he went out of my audience very indignant. He said he was very glad his boy wasn't there to hear it. He wouldn't for the world have his boy hear such stuff. But that good, deluded father now has his head bowed in shame over the career of his spoiled son.

Poor Harry Thaw! Front-paged in the newspapers, gibbeted in the pulpits these years as the shocking example of youthful depravity. He never had a fighting-chance to become a man. Perhaps there never was a child more cruelly and deliberately robbed of his birthright than this same denatured Harry Thaw. Yet in the annals of the Keystone State there are few such great business generals as the father of Harry Thaw. He

could build a great coal-empire and command a great army of men, but was strangely blind to the fact that the barrel shakes.

It isn't the ignorant who make this mistake half so much as the educated, the rich and the worldly wise.

The Menace of America lies not in the Swollen Fortunes, but in the Shrunken Souls who inherit them.

How long this nation will endure will depend upon how many Gussie boys this nation produces. Do you notice how few of our great men get their start with steam heat?

* * *

Children, Learn This Early

You boys and girls, God bless you! You have fine homes. Papa and mama love you and give you everything you need. I wonder if you get to thinking, "I don't have to turn my hand over. Papa and mama will take care of me, and when they are gone I'll inherit everything they have, so I am fixed for life."

I'm sorry for you if you think that. You are a candidate for trouble. You are going to rattle and get your bumps.

Learn it now, children: You cannot get something for nothing! Nobody can give you anything. They can "wish" it upon you. Father and mother can put money in your pocket, but you do not own it until you have earned it. They can put ideas in your mind, but you do not own them until you have proven them. They can put food in your stomach, but you do not own it until you have digested it.

You only know what you have written in the Book of Your Experience—what the courts will take as evidence when they have sworn you in as witness.

You must work, you must struggle, you must serve, you must overcome. Not to get food. You can sit around and they'll take you to the poorhouse and make you eat! But to get Wisdom, Understanding, Happiness, Manhood, Womanhood.

You get Strength from Struggle.

You get Life from Overcoming.

You get Happiness from Service.

You cannot buy a Great Arm. You earn it in Physical Service.

You cannot buy a Great Mind. You earn it in Mental Service.

You cannot buy a Great Character. You earn it in Moral Service. You overcome evil in your life. Each battle you win the angels come to minister to you. Each victory gives you more surely the scepter of power won only by the real kings and queens of earth—those who demonstrate that "He who ruleth his own spirit is greater than he who taketh the city."

For if you cannot rule your own spirit, you cannot hold the city after you have taken it.

* * *

Happiness is in Your Work

I have often thought that the three greatest diseases in America today (1915) are Vacations, Coca Cola and The Saturday Evening Post.

I don't want to attack these famous institutions "per se." They are merely symptoms. "If business interferes with pleasure, cut out the business." We simply must be

amused. Where the crowd is greatest that artificial, feverish note is loudest.

We read ourselves drunk just as surely as we drink ourselves drunk. There are ten literary drunkards, twenty amusement drunkards and fifty vacation drunkards to one alcoholic drunkard. The best-selling news-stand dope is turning America into a mental frog-pond and an intellectual slum. We are in the business of vacating ourselves into a vacancy.

Loving friends used to warn me against "breaking down." They scared me into "taking care" of myself. And I used to rest and take such good care of myself I became a physical wreck.

I saved myself by getting busier. I plunged into work I love. I found my joy in my work, not away from it. Now I do two or three men's work, and have grown from a skinny, fretful, nervous wreck into a hearty, happy man. This has been a great surprise to the world and a great disappointment to the undertaker. I am an editor in the daytime and a lecturer at night.

I edit all day and then take a vacation lecturing at night. I lecture every day—maybe two or three times—and then take a vacation at the edit job. Every day is just jam full of play and vacation. The year is one round of joy, and I ought to pay people for the privilege of speaking and writing to them instead of them paying me!

You see, I haven't any time nowadays to break down. I haven't any time to think and grunt and worry about my body. And like Paul I am happy to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord," and this old body behaves just beautifully and wags along like the tail follows the dog when I forget all about it. The grunter lets the tail wag the dog!

* * *

I have never known a ease of "overwork". I have never known of anybody killing himself by working. But I have known of multitudes killing themselves by taking vaeations.

The people who think they are overwork-

ing are merely overworrying. This is one species of selfishnesss.

To worry is to doubt God.

To work at the things you love, or for the ones you love, is to turn work into play and duty into privilege.

* * *

Don't you get lonely in a city? There's so few men and women there. There's a jam of people, most of them imitations—most of them trying to look like they get more salary. I get lonely among the butterflies of the brightlights. They are chasing amusement down the great white way. They must be amused every moment or they'll have to be alone with their empty lives. Rattleboxes and sugartits! The Prodigal Son came to himself at last and thought upon his ways. Then he arose and went to his father's house. Whenever anybody will stop chasing amusements long enough to think upon his ways, he will arise and go to his Father's House of Wisdom. There's no hope for anybody who will not stop chasing amusement long enough to think. And the

devil works day and night shifts keeping the crowd from stopping to think.

* * *

That's why the crowd isn't furnishing the strong men and women.

We must have amusement and relaxation. Study your muscles. First they contract, and then they relax. But the muscle that goes on continually relaxing is degenerating. And the individual, the community, the nation that goes on relaxing, without contracting, serving, overcoming, struggling, is degenerating.

And the more you study your muscles, the more you learn that when one muscle is relaxing, another is contracting. So you must learn that your real vacation, amusement, relaxation, is merely changing over to working another set of muscles.

Go to the bank president's office; go to the railroad magnate's office; go to the great pulpit, to the college chair—go to any place of great responsibility in a city and ask the one who fills that place, "Were you born in this city?"

The reply is almost a monotony: "I born in this city? No—I was born in Poseyville, Indiana, and I came to this city forty years ago and went to work at the bottom." He glows as he tells you of some log-cabin home, hillside or farmside where he struggled as a boy. Personally, I think this log-cabin business has been overworked for campaign purposes. Give me steam heat every time—and push-buttons. There's no virtue in a log-cabin, save that there the necessity for the struggle that brings the strength is most in evidence. There the young person gets the struggle and service that make for strength and greatness. And as that young person comes to the city and shakes in the barrel among the weaklings of the amusement-doped, clock-watching crowd, he rises above them like an eagle rises above a lot of chattering sparrows.

The cities do not make their own steam. The little minority from the farms and the hillsides controls the majority. The red blood of redemption from the country flows year by year into the national arteries, else the cities would weaken and drop off the

map. If it weren't for Poseyville, Indiana, Chicago would slide into the lake. If it were not for Poseyville, New York would lose her leadership.

* * *

I believe the most useful schools in America are the ones offering the most facilities to young people to work their way thru. Dr. H. S. Lehr used to say with pride, "Our students come to school; they are not sent." Most of those students were working their way thru. And I do not believe there is a school in Ameriea that ean show an alumni roster of men and women of uniformly greater aehievement.

This is uniting the Sehool of Books with the Sehool of Service that eompletes our education.

* * *

The Home Towns of Ameriea are siek. Some of them are dying, some are dead.

The Lure of the City is doing it.

It must be fought with the Lure of the Country. We must make the Home Town the brightest, most attractive, most promis-

ing place for every young person. The town that the young people leave is the town that the young people ought to leave.

America is to be great not in the greatness of a few cities, but in the greatness of innumerable Home Towns.

The slogan of the next great American Crusade must be, "For God and Home and the Home Town."

IV

The Violin and the Tuning

ONE DAY a great manufacturer took me thru his factory where he makes fiddles. He doesn't make violins; he makes fiddles.

A violin is only a fiddle with a college education.

I have had the feeling ever since that you and I come into this world like the fiddle comes from the factory. We have a body and a neck. That's about all there is, either to us or to the fiddle. We are empty. We haven't any strings. We haven't any bow —or any beau—yet!

When the human fiddles are about six years old they go into the primary schools and up thru the grammar grades, and get the first string—that little skinny E string. The trouble is, so many of them think they are an orchestra right away. They want to quit school and go fiddling thru life on one string!

We must show these little fiddles they

must get back into school and go up thru all the departments and institutions necessary to get the full complement of strings for their life symphonies.

After all this there comes the commencement, and the violin comes forth with the E, A, D and G strings all in place. Is it educated? Why is a violin? To wear strings? Gussie got that far and gave a lot of discord. The violin is to give music.

So there is much yet to do after getting the strings. All the book and the college can do is to give the strings—the tools, as we saw in the last chapter. After that the violin must go out into God's great Tuning School, the School of Service, and have the pegs turned.

* * *

All you ever know is what you learn in the School of Service. All you ever know is what you have lived—what you have translated from the Book of Theory into the Book of Experience. What you have put in tune. Not what you have memorized, but what you have vitalized.

In its last analysis, all you really know is

what the courts will take as evidence when you are sworn in as witness. Gussie says, "I have read in a book." Bill Whackem says, "I know!"

All of us are Christopher Columbuses, discovering the same new-old continents of Truth. We have read about them in a hazy way. We do not know them until suddenly we come upon them in our lives, and then the oldest, driest platitude crystallizes into a flashing jewel of truth in our consciousness.

* * *

O, there's such a difference between reading a thing and knowing a thing. I used to stand in the row of blessed little rascals in the old "deestrick school" and read out of McGuffey's celebrated literature, "If—I—p-p-play—with—the—fi-fi — i-i-i-r-r-r-e—I—will—g-e-e-e-t—m-y-y-y—f-f-f-f-ing-er-r-r-rs—bur-r-r-r-ned—period!"

I didn't learn that. I wish I had learned by reading in that reader that if I play with the fire I will get my fingers burned. I had to slap my hands on hot stoves and coffee-pots, and get all kinds of blisters, to learn it.

Then I had to go around showing the blisters, boring my friends and taking up a collection of sympathy—"Look at my bad luck!" Fool!

This isn't a lecture—this is a confession!

* * *

Learning About Something for Nothing

I WAS thirty-four years learning one sentence—You can't get something for nothing! It took me so long because I was naturally bright. It takes that kind longer than a human being. They are so smart you can't teach them with a few bumps—you have to pulverize them.

That sentence takes me back to the days when I was a "hired man" on the farm. You'd hardly believe it—that I used to be a "hired man" on the farm at ten dollars a month, and "washed, mended and found." You see me standing on this platform in my graceful and cultured manner, and you wouldn't believe that I had ever trained an orphan calf to drink out of a copper kettle, or that I had ever driven a yoke of oxen and said the words I thought had to go with that

job. May the Lord forgive me, but I have!

I went to my first county fair. Fellow sufferers, you remember that at a county fair all the folks sort out into their own departments. Some people go to the fancy-work department, some go to the canned fruit department, some go to the swine department —everybody goes to his own department. And the suckers! They go to their department. That is the "trimming department."

I was in the "trimming department" in five minutes. Nobody told me where it was. I didn't need to be told. All the suckers on the grounds were there. That is because the barrel always shakes all of one size to one place.

Right at the entrance of the local Midway, I met a gentleman. I know he was a gentleman because he said he was a gentleman. He had a little light table that he could move quickly. Whenever the climate became too salubrious, he would move the table to pastures greener.

On that table were three little shells in a row. There was a little pea under the middle shell. I saw it there! But the man was

fooled about it—the gentleman running the game. He thought it was under the end shell, and he kept watching that end shell. I knew better, for I was naturally bright. He bet me it was under the end shell. Here was a great chance to get something for nothing. I bet all the money I had on that middle shell. This wasn't gambling—this was a sure thing. (It was!) I hated to take the money. It seemed like robbing father. The gentleman had a family to keep and here I was robbing him, because I was brighter than he.

But I did not rob father! Father cleaned me out of every cent I had in about four seconds. I went over to the other side of the grounds. That was all I could do now—I couldn't go in and see the mermaid. But I didn't learn the lesson from the bump. I said the thing every fool says when he gets his bump and doesn't learn: "Next time I'll be more careful."

When anybody says that, he's due for a return date on the same bump!

* * *

Getting in on the Ground Floor

I grew older and people began to notice I

was naturally bright and therefore good picking. They began to let me in on the ground floor. Did anybody ever let you in on the ground floor? I never could stick. I always slid thru somehow and landed in the cellar, every time anybody let me in on the ground floor.

I began to invest in gold mines. And silver mines. Nobody knows—nobody ever will know, if I can help it, how many gold and silver and precious metal mines I am in. I'm in them yet. I can't get out. I have something to live for—the dividends! I've been so near to the dividends I could smell them! Only one more assessment, and then we'll cut the melon! I've heard that all my life and have never yet gotten a piece of the rind!

* * *

I got the gold cure without Dr. Keeley's aid. Then I got interested in Florida, thru some kind friends in Kansas City who desired to make me rich in the Everglades. I have an alligator ranch in Florida, below the frost line. Alligators do better below the frost line. I'll sell it by the gallon.

Which is not saying all Florida is bunk—

no indeed, just the part the slick promoter sells you for a song, the part that is going to double in value before the fifteenth of next month.

* * *

Getting "Selected"

I was thirty-four years old when the big killing came. Fellow sufferers, if you have tears to shed, get your shedder ready!

I got a confidential letter from a friend of our family I had never met. His name was Thomas A. Cleage, and he lived in the Rialto Building, St. Louis, Missouri. He wrote me this in extreme confidence: "You have been selected."

Ah! were you ever selected?

Then you know the thrill of joy that rent my manly bosom as I read this letter from this friend of our family who wrote: "You have been selected, because you are a prominent citizen and have a large influence in your community."

You see, he did know me!

"You are to receive a thousand percent dividends." A thousand percent! Did you get that? I hope you did. I didn't!

I took a night train to St. Louis. I was so afraid somebody would beat me there. I sat up all night in a day coach to save money for Tom. But I needn't to have hurried so. Tom would have waited a month on me—with the sheep-shears ready! "Lambie, lambie, lambie! Come to St. Louis!"

I don't get any sympathy from this crowd. You jeer, you laugh, you respect not my feelings. I'm not going to tell you a thing that happened in St. Louis. It is none of your business!

But I'm so glad I went to St. Louis. I was naturally bright. So bright I couldn't learn back in the Ohio town, but had to go clear to St. Louis, Missouri, to Thomas A. Cleage's bucket-shop, and pay Tom eleven hundred dollars. But I got the thirty-third degree. I got the cure—got the fever all out of my blood.

It is worth eleven hundred dollars every day to know that one sentence—You can't get something for nothing. Not merely to know it, but to KNOW it. Life just begins to get juicy when you KNOW it. Oh, the joy of going thru life day by day and not

getting fussed up over these chances to get something for nothing. I wouldn't grasp a fortune now—wouldn't touch it if it were right here on the platform. Come away, Ralphie, it doesn't belong to you; somebody lost it. It's a coffee-pot!

If anybody now offers me more than ten to twenty percent dividends I know he is no friend to our family.

If he offers me fifty percent, I shout for the police.

I'm yet on the suckers' lists. Just the other day I got another confidential letter. It started out, "You have been se—" Plunk! It went into the waste-basket.

* * *

Oh, Absalom, my son, my son! Learn it early in life—the law of compensation is never suspended; you can't get something for nothing. If you don't, then you'll be selected to receive a thousand percent dividends, too. But, Ab, it always means, you have been selected to receive this bunch of blisters because you look like the biggest sucker on the local landscape!

* * *

The other night in a little town of perhaps a thousand, a banker took me up to his office after the lecture, in which I had related the above. "The audience laughed with you and thought it very, very funny," said he. "I wish you knew how tragically true is every word of it. I wish you could see what I have to see in this town. I wish you could know of the thousands of dollars that go out of this community every month into just such fool enterprises as you confessed to. The saddest part of it is that these thousands come from the pockets of the people who can least afford to lose."

* * *

So I have no apology to offer for taking all this time to tell how I have learned one sentence. If it took me thirty-four years to learn one sentence, don't you see the need of an eternity? To me that is the greatest argument for eternal life—how slowly I learn.

* * *

Those Commencement Orations

YET EVERY DAY some young person says: "You see, by June I shall have finished my education."

Bless them all! They will have merely gotten another string on their fiddle.

After they "finish" they will have a Commence-ment, not an End-ment, as they think. Just the commencement of the next chapter of their infinite education. Children, this is not to sneer, but to cheer. Isn't it glorious that life is one infinite succession of commencements and promotions!

I love to attend high school commencements. The stage is so beautifully decorated. There is a row of geraniums in front, there is a big oleander on the side, and a long-whiskered rug in the middle, just as the Ladies' Home Journal directs in the April number. The graduates sit in a semicircle on the stage in their new patent leather. I know how it hurts. It is the first time they have worn it.

Then they make their orations. Every time I hear their orations I like them better, because every year I am getting younger.

Damsel Number One comes forth and begins:

"Beyond the Alps (sweep arms forward to the left, left arm higher) lieth Italy! (Bring arms down, let the fingers follow the wrist. Wouldn't it be embarrassing at a commencement, if the fingers wouldn't follow the wrist? Think of the shock to the audience if the wrist should sweep downward and the fingers should stay up in the air!)

Applause, especially from relatives.

Damsel Number Two, who generally comes second, now stands forth at the same lead-pencil mark on the floor, resplendent in a pink creation caught up with something-or-other:

"We (hands at half-mast and separating) are rowing (business of propelling an aerial boat with two fingers of each hand, head inclined). We are not drifting (hands slide downward)."

* * *

Children, we are not laughing at you. We are laughing at ourselves, and at how we have learned these great truths that you have memorized, but not vitalized.

You get the most beautiful truths from Emerson's essays, but that is not knowing them. You cannot know them until you have lived them. It is a grand thing to say, "Beyond the Alps lieth Italy," but you can never really say that until you have yourselves struggled over Alps of difficulty and have seen the Italy of victory beyond. It is fine to say, "We are rowing and not drifting." But you cannot say that in tune until you have pulled on the oar.

O, Gussie, get an oar!

* * *

My "Maiden Sermon"

DID YOU ever hear a young preacher, just captured, just out of a "factory"? Did you ever hear him preach his "maiden sermon"? I wish you had heard mine. I had a call. At least, I thought I had a call. I might have been "short-circuited," but the "brethren" waited upon me, and told me I had been "selected." Maybe this was a local call and not long distance.

They gave me six weeks to load the gospel gun and get ready for my "try-out."

I certainly loaded it to the muzzle. But I made the mistake I am trying to warn you against. Instead of going to the one book where I could have gotten a sermon—the Book of My Experience, I went to the books in my father's library. "As the poet Shakespeare has so beautifully said," and then I took a chunk from Shakespeare and nailed it on page five of my sermon. "List to the poet Tennyson." Come here, Lord Alfred. So I soldered these chunks from the books together with my own native genius. I worked that sermon up into the most beautiful splurges and spasms. I bedecked it with metaphors and semaphores. I filled it with climaxes, both wet and dry. I had the finest wet climax on page fourteen, where I had made a little mark in the margin which meant "cry here." This was the spilling-point of the wet climax. I was to cry on the left-hand side of the page.

Then I committed it all to memory, and went to the lady who taught expression to get it expressed. You must get it expressed!

I got the most beautiful gestures nailed into every page. You know about gestures

—these things you make in the air with your hands as you speak. You can notice it on me yet!

I am not sneering at expression. Expression is a noble art. But you must get something to express!

Here I made my mistake. I got a lot of gestures. I got an express-wagon, and didn't get any load for it. So it rattled. I got a necktie, but didn't get any man to hang it on. I got up before a mirror for six weeks, day by day, and said that sermon to the looking-glass. It got so it would run itself. I could have gone to sleep and that sermon wouldn't have hesitated.

Then came the grand day. The boy wonder stood forth before that large and admiring throng. I delivered that sermon more grandly than ever to a mirror. Every gesture went off the bat just where planned. I cried on page fourteen. I never knew it was in me—but I certainly got it all out that day.

Then I did another fine thing—I sat down. I wish I had done that earlier! I wish now I had sat down before I got up. I was the last man out of the church—and I hurried!

But they beat me out—all nine of them. When I went out the door, the old sexton said as he jiggled the key in the door to hurry me, "Don't feel bad, bub, I've heerd worse than that. You're all right, bub, but you don't know nothing yet."

I cried all the way to town. If he had plunged a dagger into me he wouldn't have hurt me so much. It has taken a good many years to learn that the old man was right. I had wonderful truth in that sermon. No sermon ever had greater truth, but I hadn't lived it. The old man meant that I didn't know my own sermon.

* * *

So, children, when you prepare your commencement oration, write about the thing you know best. If you know more about peeling potatoes than anything else, you make your oration on "Peeling Potatoes," and the applause will peal from every seat.

Out of every thousand books published, at least nine hundred do not pay the cost of the first edition. As you study the books that do live, you note that they are the books that have been lived. Perhaps the books that fail

have even more of truth in them and are better written, yet they lack the vital impulse. They come out of the author's head. The books that live come out of the author's heart and life. They are what he really knows. They come surging and pulsating, come from his own Book of Experience.

Life only comes from life, and we have life more abundantly as our lives touch greater lives. The best part of your schooling is not from touching books, but from touching the lives of their teachers.

Here is the dividing line between success and failure in education. The books and schools do their part well in giving the tools and the strings. But the failure comes if we go no farther.

We study agriculture in books. But that does not make us an agriculturist. We must take a hoe and go out and agricult!

* * *

YOU MUST LIVE YOUR SONG

"There was never a picture painted,
There was never a poem sung,
But the soul of the artist fainted,
And the poet's heart was wrung."

So many young people think because they have a good voice and they have cultivated it, they are singers. All this cultivation and irritation and irrigation and gargling of the throat, are merely symptoms of a singer—merely neckties. Singers look better in neckties.

They think the song comes from the diaphragm. But it doesn't; it comes from the heart, chaperoned by the diaphragm.

You can never sing one song you haven't lived.

I said that to Jessie the other day at the chautauqua. She has a beautiful voice and had been away to "Ber-leen" to study. She sang that afternoon in the tent, "The Last Rose of Summer." She sang it with every note so well placed, with the sweetest little trills and tendrils, with a smile just as her teacher had taught her. Jessie exhibited all the machinery to sing "The Last Rose of Summer," but she had no steam. All she sang was the notes. She might as well have sung "Pop Goes the Weasel!"

When I got back to the hotel Jessie was crying. "Why did I fail?"

"Why, Jessie, I think this is the best singing lesson you have ever had. You tried to sing 'The Last Rose of Summer,' when you don't know very much yet about the first rose of summer. Child, I hope you'll never know the ache and disappointment and despair you'll have to know before you can really sing 'The Last Rose of Summer,' for that is the sob of a broken-hearted woman." O, why do young girls always try to execute that impossible song—impossible to them? And they always do "execute" it!

* * *

Why Carrie Jacobs-Bond Succeeded

The other night James G. MacDermid, Sibyl Sammis and I sat at a table in the Cliff Dwellers' Club in Chicago, listening to the fourth member of the party—a woman clad in black, with a sweet, expressive face crowned with silvery hair. She is a well-known song writer, and her songs go out of Chicago literally by the carload.

I wanted to ask her, "How did you succeed? How did you know what kind of songs the people wanted?"

"Isn't it good to be here? Isn't it great to have friends? And a fine home and money?" she said. "I have had such a struggle in my life. I have lived on one meal a day and didn't know where the next meal was coming from. I had been left alone in the world without resources. I had years of struggle. Sick and down-and-out, I began writing songs in my little back-room. I wrote what was in my heart. I wrote of my own life and struggles. My songs just came pouring out of my life. I had to write them for relief. And I am so happy that the world loves my songs, and buys them and asks for more of them."

That woman was Carrie Jacobs-Bond. She wrote "The Perfect Day," "His Lullaby," "Just a Wearyin' for You," and so many more of those little, simple songs that tug at your heart and sometimes moisten your eyes. I have looked at the songs. Why, anybody could write such songs—just a few words and a few simple notes.

But I know better since that night in the Cliff Dwellers' Club. Books of theory and harmony only teach us to write the notes,

which are only the skeleton. The notes are only the place to hang a song. The song must come from the life.

If Carrie Jacobs-Bond had never been hungry, lonely, discouraged, struggling, she never would have known how to write one of the songs that have made her famous. Her defeat was her victory.

So we don't have to know what the world wants. We have merely to produce the perfect product of our own life, and the world clamors for it. The greatest art is merely the truest echo of our living.

* * *

This the Lesson of Your Bumps

MY FRIENDS, I do not argue that you and I must drink the dregs of defeat, or that our lives must fill with sorrow or become wrecks. No—but I do insist that none of us will ever know real success in any line of human endeavor, until that success flows from the fullness of our experience just as the songs came pouring from the life of Carrie Jacobs-Bond.

Many audiences are gathered here. Each

person is a different audience. No two are alike. Each has a different fight to make and a different burden to carry. Each of us has more trouble than anybody else.

You older ones, there are chapters of positive heroism in your lives. You know most about The University of Hard Knocks. You have walked the floor when you could not sleep. You have cried yourselves to sleep. You know best that "beyond the Alps lieth Italy."

A good many of you here got bumped today, or you expect to get bumped tomorrow. Maybe you got bumped years ago and the wound doesn't heal, and you think it never will heal. You came here thinking that perhaps if you came you would forget your trouble a little while. I know there are people in this audience in trouble and in pain. Never do this many gather but what some have aching hearts.

If I were to go on talking about it, pretty soon I'd see your eyes glisten. And my eyes would leak. For I am like you—I have had more trouble than anybody else.

Then you young folks! You aren't much

interested in this lecture. You are polite to me, because this is a polite neighborhood, but you don't care much for this lecture. You are saying, "What's this all about? What's that man talking about? I haven't had these things—and I'm not going to have them, either!"

And maybe some of you are naturally bright!

Children, you are not old enough to feel the need of this kind of Castoria.

But you will know. You will need it. I don't ask you to believe this—only remember it, so when you are bumped it will feel like a poultice. Your life is going to be very much like all other lives. All lives have about the same elements. You are going to weep. Some of you are going to cry yourselves to sleep. Some of you are going to walk the floor when you can't sleep. You are going to get bumped just as hard as papa and mama have been bumped. It's just going to be terrible!

Some of you are going to know the keenest sorrow, when the ones or one you trusted most, the ones closest to you, betray you.

Maybe, betray you with a kiss! You will go thru your Gethsemane, and you'll think there isn't going to come any morning. You will say, "God, let me die. I am so unhappy. I have nothing more to live for."

But it is a long time after that until you are dead.

You are yet to discover that the best part of our lives comes after we have been killed a few times!

* * *

This the Path to Heaven

And you are going to learn thru the years and the bumps and the tears, that all these things somehow are necessary to complete our education.

These bumps and hard knocks do not break the fiddle—they only turn the pegs!

Thru the years and the tears these bumps and tragedies and Waterloos draw the Strings of the Soul tighter and tighter, nearer and nearer to God's Great Concert Pitch, where the discords fade out of our lives, where the music divine and the harmonies celestial come from the same old strings that

had been sending forth all that noise and discord!

Thus we know our education is being finished—when the evil and the wrong and the discord go out of our lives, and when peace, understanding, sympathy, love and harmony fill them.

Then and not till then, is our Education completed.

For Education is merely the path to complete Happiness—the pathway to Heaven!

V

Looking Backward

WHAT MEMORIES revive in all of us as I touch these old familiar chords. In my earlier talks on "The University of Hard Knocks" I used to discuss these matters at length. Perhaps it will not be amiss to note a few of them here.

You gather from these remarks I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth, tho it is evident I could have handled a pretty good-sized spoon. My father was a Methodist preacher, and we had tin spoons. We never had to tie a red string around our spoons when we loaned them for the ladies' aid society oyster supper. We always got our spoons back!

The first money I ever earned, I got by walking several miles into the country and gathering sheaves all day in the harvest field. You remember those old reaper days. That night I was so proud when that farmer patted me on the head and said: "You are the best boy to work I ever saw." Then the

cheerful old miser put a nickel in my blistered hand. That nickel looked bigger than any money I have since handled.

* * *

The "Last Day of School"

Yet I was years learning it is much easier to make money than to learn how to handle it, hence the tale that follows.

I was sixteen years old and a school teacher. Sweet sixteen—I mean, green sixteen. Cheer up, children, only green things grow! I was so tall and awkward then—I have since changed so much! I got the school because I was several dollars the lowest bidder. They used to say anybody could teach "kids."

I had never studied pedagogy, but I had whittled out three rules of teaching that I thought would make it go. My three rules of teaching were—

1, Make 'em study.

2, Make 'em recite. That is, fill 'em up and then empty 'em!

3, Get your money. With the accent on the third rule.

I walked the thirteen miles, six and a half each way, most of the time, to save money. I was not so narrow as to confine my teaching to one method. I was broad enough to use all methods the same day. With the small fry in the front rows I used a small paddle to win their confidence and to arouse their enthusiasm for an education. But with pupils larger and more muscular than the teacher, I used love and moral suasion.

We ended the school with an "exhibition." Did you ever attend the old back country "ex-hi-bition" The people came that day from all over the township. They were so glad our school was closing they all turned out to make it a success. They brought great baskets of provender and we had a feast. We covered the school desks with boards and then stacked them high with fried chicken and doughnuts and pie—forty kinds of pie! Applebutter pie with the cross-barred lid, and dried-apple pie that was positively "swell"!

Then we had a "doings." Everybody did a stunt. We executed a lot of literature, and "execute" is the word that tells what we

did to literature that day. I can shut my eyes now and see that show. I can see my pupils coming up one by one to speak their piece. I hardly knew them, for they were dressed up, and I had on a collar. Father had cut their hair with the sheepshears. Mother had washed them—washed them clear back of the ears—and even into them, twisting up the towel into a gimlet for that purpose. They wore collars that stuck out all around like they had pushed their heads thru a wagon-wheel.

I can see them coming up one by one to speak their piece. I can see "The Soldier of the Legion Day Dying in Algiers." We had him die again that day, and he died a terrible death as we executed him. I can see "The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck." I can see Mary's little lamb come skipping again over the stage. I can see the tow-headed patriot again come forward to recite Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!" I have often thought that if Patrick Henry had attended our "ex-hi-bition," he would have said, "Give me death!"

Then came a breathless hush, as "teacher"

came forth to say farewell. It was customary to cry, but I thought I would yell. Tomorrow I would get my money. I had a speech I had been saying over and over until it would run itself. But somehow when I got up before that last day of school audience, and opened my mouth, it was a great opening, but it missed fire. There I stood with my mouth open and nothing coming out. It came out of my eyes. Tears rolled down my cheeks until I could hear them spatter on my six-dollar suit.

And my pupils wept as their dear teacher said farewell! Parents wept. It was the teariest time you ever saw. I managed to say, "Weep not for me, dear friends, I am going away from you—but I shall return and teach your school next year."

I think they cried harder after that!

* * *

Due at "Corncutting"

Next day I drew my money. I had it all in one joyous wad—$240. I was going home with head high and aircastles built even higher.

But I never got home with the money. Talk about the fool and his money, and you get very personal. On the road home I met Squire K, and he borrowed all the money of me. I loaned it so freely to him and no questions asked, because Squire K was "such a good man," and a pillar of the church. I used to wonder why he didn't take a pillow to church.

Squire K gave me a note for $240, due at "corncutting," as we termed that annual fall-time paying-up season. I have that note yet. I have a faded, yellow, tear-spattered note for two hundred and forty dollars due at "corncutting," back in the eighties.

Squire K has gone from earth—has gone to his eternal reward. I scarcely know whether to look up or down as I say that. He never left any address that I could find.

Yet I gained. There is compensation and hard knocks education in all these bumps. The school teaching was worth thousands in experience, but I paid two hundred and forty thirteen-mile-a-day dollars to learn a little, simple lesson I couldn't learn out of the books—that a fool can make money, but only

a wise man can spend it. And incidentally I learned it may be safer to do business with a first-class sinner than a second-class saint.

This isn't a slap at the church, but a slap at the worst enemies of the church, the foes of its own household.

* * *

Graduating from the High School

But let me add just one lesson—the lesson that every discontented, ungrateful soul must learn.

We had a commencement in the home town high school. A class of brilliant and gifted young men and women went forth to take charge of the world. We were so glad the world had waited on us so long, and we were so sure the world would be richly repaid for waiting.

We were going to be presidents and senators, authors and authoresses, poets and poetesses, scientists and scientistesses, geniuses and geniusesses, and things like that. There was just one boy in the class who wasn't bright. This Jim Lambert person didn't have any brilliant career in view; he didn't

even want to be postmaster. He somehow couldn't learn like the rest of us, for he lacked the intellect. They "conditioned" him into the senior class, and so we all looked down on him.

As commencement day approached, the committee of the class appointed for that purpose took Jim around back of the schoolhouse and broke the news to him that they were going to let him graduate with the class, but they wouldn't let him speak, because he couldn't make a speech. So they hid Jim on the stage back of the oleander that commencement night.

* * *

Shake the barrel!

The girl who was to become the authoress became the helloess in the home telephone exchange, and has become absolutely indispensable to the community. The girl who was to become the poetess became the goddess at the general delivery window and superintendent of the stamp-licking department of the home postoffice. The boy who was going to Congress is raising the best

corn in the county, and his wife is speaker of the house.

Some of them are doing very well—especially Jim Lambert.

Jim, who wasn't bright, is the head of one of the big manufacturing plants of the South, with a lot of men working for him. The committee that took him behind the schoolhouse to inform him he couldn't speak at commencement, would now have to wait in line before a frosted door marked, "Mr. Lambert, Private." They would have to send up their cards, and have the watchdog who guards the door tell them, "Cut it short, he's busy!" before they could interview him today.

They hung a picture of Mr. Lambert in the high school back there at the last alumni meeting. Hung it in the same room where they hid Jim behind the oleander when he graduated, because he wasn't bright.

Dull boy, you with your eyes tear-dimmed sometimes because you can't learn like the bright ones in your class—doesn't the story of the Lambert boy cheer you up a little?

* * *

Twenty-One Years Afterwards!

I was janitor of the schoolhouse. Some of my classmates will never know how their thoughtless jeers wounded the shabby boy who swept the floors and carried in the coal. After commencement my career seemed to end, just where the careers of the rest of the class seemed to begin. They were going off to college and were going to do great things. But I was too poor to go. The week after commencement I went off to a printshop in another town, rolled up my sleeves and went to work in the "devil's corner" to earn my daily bread.

It took such a lot of bread!

I was discouraged and bitter at my fate. I had no chance like the rest.

Twenty-one years afterwards, a lyceum bureau sent me back to that home town to give a lecture. Every lecturer has a thrill—and generally a frost—when he goes back to lecture in the home town. He becomes a boy again, not a lecturer, for there are the boys he played with, and fought with—down there in the front rows, with their wives and their children. And he has got-

ten his lectures out of this home town, and his horrible examples, and if he gives his lecture he will stir things up. His heroes and villains are within striking distance.

* * *

I went back to the same old hall to lecture, and stood upon the same old boards where twenty-one years before I had stood to orate, and had said in my impassioned eloquence, "Ladies and gentlemen: Greece is go-o-one, and Rome is no mo-o-o-ore, but fear not, for I will save you!" or words to that effect.

Then I went back to the hotel with my eyes swimming and my heart afire with gratitude. I had a picture of the class—the one that had been taken twenty-one years before, just before we graduated. I hadn't seen the picture these twenty-one years, for I didn't have the quarter.

Hours I sat with that picture that night, living it over and getting a truer perspective of life. If you want to read the greatest chapter of life, you sit alone at night with a picture of your playmates taken twenty-one years before.

In that picture were fifty-four young people, all going to do wonderful things. But the barrel had been shaking, and almost every one that I expected would go up had shaken down, while those I expected would go down, had gone up. Out of that class, one had gone to a pulpit, one had gone to Congress and one had gone to the penitentiary. There had been drunkards, gamblers, wrecks and a suicide in that class. It seemed as tho every note on the keyboard of human possibility and failure had been struck in that one class.

And when that picture was taken the oldest was not more than eighteen, yet it seemed as tho the destiny of every one was pretty nearly decided. They were still going the way their faces were turned in that picture.

The boy who skimmed over his work in school was still skimming over the work of life.

The boy who went to the bottom of things in school was still going to the bottom of things in life. Which had helped him to go to the top of things.

Jim Lambert was still interested in ma-

chinery as he was when he was so dull in his books.

The boy who traded knives with me and skinned me. Why was it he could always beat me in a trade? Well, he went on trading knives and skinning folks. Twenty-one years afterwards he was doing time in the state penitentiary as a forger. He was now called a very bad man, when twenty-one years ago as he did the same things on a smaller scale they called him smart and bright.

How easy it is to see—as you look backward.

How hard it is to see—as you look forward.

The bookworm boy who didn't mix with the other boys, who didn't whisper, who didn't get into trouble, who always had his hair combed and said, "If you please," used to hurt me. All the mothers used to say as they punished their own reprobate sons, "Why can't you be like Harry? He'll become president of the United States, and you'll go to jail." That model Harry never had the gumption to do anything but sit

around and be a model. I believe it is Mr. Webster who defines a model as a small imitation of the real thing. Harry certainly was a successful model. He became a seedy, sleepy old relic at forty. It was the boys who had the hustle and the life and energy, who occasionally needed licking—and who got it good and plentifully—who really achieved things.

It might be added that Clarice, our society girl—our real pretty girl of the class, who won the majolica vase in the home paper beauty coupon contest, went right on thru the years in the social spotlight, primping and flirting. At last she got on the remnant counter with no bidders. The girls of the class who shone in society mainly as wall-flowers, were the ones who became the mothers in the real homes of the community. Somehow, the boys hurrahed for giddy Clarice, but picked a wall-flower to preside over their new home!

* * *

The Boy I Had Envied!

Frank was the boy I had envied most. He had everything—had a fine home, a loving

father, money, opportunity and a great career awaiting him. Everybody said that Frank was the most popular boy in the town, and he was brilliant and lovable. People always said he would make his mark in the world and make the town proud of him.

Many a time as I plugged away at the printer's case I longed for Frank's chance.

Twenty-one years afterwards when I got off the train in the old town I asked, "Where's Frank?" Presently we went out on the edge of the town to the cemetery and stood at a grave, where I read on the headstone, "Frank."

And I had the story of the kind of a tragedy too pitifully common these days. The story of the boy who had every advantage and opportunity, but had everything given him—had all of life made too easy for him. He had no discipline in the School of Service, and he never entered his career. He just seemed to plunge headlong hellward. He disappointed every proud hope, broke his father's heart, spent his fortune, shocked a community, and finally ended his wasted life with a bullet fired by his own hand.

* * *

Pulling on the Oar

Did you get the great lesson from "Ben Hur"?

The Jewish boy is torn from his home in disgrace. Heartbroken he is haled into court and tried for a crime he never committed. Ben Hur didn't get a fair trial. Nobody gets a fair trial at the hands of this world. That is why the great Judge has said, "Judge not, for you have not the full evidence in the case."

Then they condemn him. They lead him away to the galleys, they chain him to the bench, chain him to the oar. There follow the days and years when the lash falls on his back as he pulls on the oar. Day by day his back bleeds, his heart aches, his eyes fill with tears. He is the victim of cruel, mocking fate. He is getting nowhere; just pulling on the oar.

Just as you and I cry out. In a kitchen or an office or wherever we work we seem so often like slaves just pulling on the oar. Life seems just one futureless round of drudgery. The lash of necessity falls on our

back, and our heart aches and our eyes fill up with tears. O, God, how long! Each one of us can look across the street and see somebody who doesn't have to pull on the oar. They have a better time than we have and we envy them.

We cannot see that they, too, are pulling on the oar. We can only see the oar we seem chained to. We do not see that those we envy are often envying us.

But look at the chariot race in Antioch. See the thousands in the circus. See Messala, the haughty Roman, and see! Ben Hur from the galleys in the other chariot driving those Arabian steeds pitted against Messala. Down the course hurl these twin thunderbolts. Who will win? "The man with the stronger forearms," whisper the thousands.

There comes the crucial moment in the race when Ben Hur with those mighty forearms of steel that he had been getting in the galleys pulling on the oar—when those tremendous arms are able to pull those flying Arabians into the inner ring, and Ben Hur wins the race, because he had been pulling on the oar! Had Ben Hur never been ar-

rested, and condemned, he never could have won the race.

Sooner or later you and I are to discover as we pull on the oar, lashed so often by grim necessity, that Providence doesn't make any mistakes in its bookkeeping. Every honest effort we make, tho blindly and despairingly, is somehow laid up for us as a bank account of strength, at compound interest. And the time comes when we are in the chariot race, when we win the victory—when we strike the blow, when we stand and do not fall—with the strength we got back there in the clouds when we were pulling on the oar.

* * *

Standing at Frank's grave I thanked God for the oar. I am not an example of success. But I am a very grateful pupil in the first reader class of the University of Hard Knocks.

VI

Looking Forward

THIS IS the Best Day of My Life! It is the Best Day of Your Life. It is the Best Day of Everybody's Life.

All of us are wiser, stronger, greater today than ever before. All of the past is ours today at compound interest. All the past has been spent to prepare for today.

I am so glad for today!

I am so sorry for the one who doesn't believe it. I am sorry for the one who weeps on my shoulder and says, "I wish I were a child again. O, if I could only live my life over. I was happy when I was a child, and I'm not happy now. Those were the best days of my life."

Wake up, my friend! Your clock has run down! You say the child is happy? The babe doesn't know what happiness is, because the babe hasn't known anything else. You've got to live long and get bumped and disappointed and cry yourself to sleep before you can know what happiness really is.

We don't know how to appreciate the day until we've been in the night.

We don't know how to appreciate food until we've been hungry; nor rest until we've been fatigued.

Do you know what heaven is? Just get the toothache and then wait until it quits. That is heaven.

* * *

WAITING TO THE "SECOND TABLE"

I'm sorry for a child. I don't want to be a child again. I don't want to live it over. I wouldn't take my chances going thru it all again and getting here today. I deserved killing a thousand times. I don't see how I escaped.

My advice to children is, Don't be a child any longer than you have to be, for it's better farther on.

Life's great truth is, It's Better Farther On.

I remember when a child, the elder used to come to our house and stay for dinner. He used to be the easiest man to get to stay for dinner I ever saw. That was the big dinner. Mother always outdid herself when

the elder stayed for dinner. She'd uncork about eleven cans of fruit, and jelly and jam and watermelon preserves. And there would be a great big plate full of fried chicken, and gravy and mashed potatoes!

I could hardly wait for dinner, I was so hungry. Then the elder would sit down at the head of the table, and father would say to me, "Boy, you run along into the other room and wait! There isn't room for you."

I used to go into that other room while they ate the big dinner, and nearly starve. I was the hungriest one in the house, and waiting because I was a child. I used to sit there and yammer thru a crack in the door at them eating the big dinner out in the other room, and I used to think heaven must be a place where everybody gets to eat at the first table!

I would see the dinner going fast. There was only one piece of chicken left on the plate—the neck. O, Lord, save the neck!

And the elder took that!

Then I have seen that good elder come into the room where I was starving, he full of that good dinner. He would come up to

that little hungry wretch waiting behind the door. "Brother Parlette, is this your boy?" He would put his hand in benediction on my head—my head wasn't the place that needed the benediction!—and say, "My boy, you want to have a good time now."

Now! With all the chicken gone!

"You want to have a good time now, my boy, because you are seeing the best days of your life right now."

The dear old liar! I was seeing the worst days of my life. If there is anybody short-changed—if there is anybody who doesn't have a good time, it's a child.

* * *

Each Year Brings More

I don't say this to make a child unhappy. A child is happy. A boy is happy with fuzz on his upper lip. But he'll be happier when his lip feels more like mine—like a piece of sandpaper. Why, there are chapters and chapters of happiness undreamed of in his philosophy. Perhaps there is a time coming when all the millions of girls in the world will boil down into one girl—"the only girl

in the world" for him. The time may come when he'll find her, or she'll find him, according to the suffragette indications. He'll take her little, soft, white hand into his big, rough, horny fist and say, "That little hand will never be put into dishwater."

Classic fib!

They'll think they can't possibly be happier than that, but those two precious children are only beginning. Wait till you're my age. I know that far, and I know it's the best today. Anybody in this audience older than I am, I envy you; you're nearer heaven. Anybody in this audience younger than I am, I pity you; hurry up!

A child can be full of joy. But when the child is full of joy, it doesn't hold enough joy. Not more than a pint; then it slops over.

Afterwhile that same child will hold a quart of joy, and not make half so much fuss.

I hold a gallon!

Some of you folks must hold a barrel! I don't mean circumference. I mean every year increases our capacity for joy. Our life

begins small. But it grows and widens with the years. Bigger and bigger it becomes until this old world actually gets too small for us and presently the fences go down and, hooray! we're in heaven!

* * *

We Cannot Grow Old

So we cannot grow old. Our life never stops. It goes on and on forever.

That is why we cannot grow old. Anything that doesn't stop cannot have age. This hall will grow old; it will stop. This stage will grow old; it will stop. Even my lecture will grow old; it will stop!

But you and I will never grow old, for God cannot grow old; and you and I will go on living as long as God lives.

I am not worried today over what I do not know. I used to be worried. I used to say, "I have not time to answer you now!" But today it is such a relief to look people in the face and say, "I don't know." Some day I'll know. Every day the answer comes to something.

It will take an eternity to know an infinity!

* * *

I discover that the man who says the world is degenerating, has been looking in the glass too much.

I discover the world is all looking-glass. We see around us just what we have in our own heart.

I'm sorry for the man who says this is a bad world, for he sees himself.

I'm sorry for the man who says, "Everybody is trying to rob you." Instinctively, I put my hand on my wallet.

If we call the world bad, it shouts back like an echo, "Bad! bad! bad!"

If we sing to the world, it sings back to us.

If we love the world, it loves us.

* * *

Defeats That Become Victories

Children, when you hear an orator speak and you note the ease and power of his work, do you ever think of the years of struggle he spent in preparing? Do you ever think of the times that orator tried to speak and

failed, and went back to his room in disgrace, mortified and broken-hearted? Thru it all there came the discipline and experience and grim resolve that resulted in the successful orator you now hear.

When you hear the musician and see the ease of that performance, do you think of the years of struggle and overcoming necessary to do it with that finish and grace? That is the story of the actor, the author and every other one of attainment.

Do you note that the tropics, the countries with the balmiest climate, produce the weakest peoples? Do you note that the conquering races are those that struggle with both heat and cold? Be glad you live in a land where the mercury goes below zero—even if you are not in the coal business. The tropics are the geographical Gussies.

Do you note that people grow more in lean years than in fat years? Crop failures aren't calamities, but blessings in disguise. People go to the devil with full pockets; they turn to God when hunger hits them. "Is not this Babylon that I have builded?" Belshazzar

will tell you that the "hard times" are the Needful Knocks.

Do you remember that they had to lock John Bunyan in Bedford jail before he would write that immortal "Pilgrims' Progress"? Perhaps some of us should go to jail to do our best work!

Do you remember that one musician became deaf before he wrote the music the world will always hear? Do you remember that one author became blind before he wrote "Paradise Lost"?

Do you remember that Saul of Tarsus was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, with wealth and honor at his command? But he had to be blinded and scourged and humiliated before he could become the great apostle to the Gentiles.

Do you remember that the Bull Run battle must be fought before you come to Appomattox?

Do you see all around you that Success is ever the Phoenix rising from the ashes of defeat?

Then when you graduate and you stand in a row with your diplomas in your hands

and the relatives and friends shake your hand and say, "Success to you!"—I shall take your hand and say, "Defeat to you!" "And a black eye to you!" "And plenty of bumps to you!"

For I want you to become Great, and Strong, and Successful, and Happy, and Educated!

VII

Getting to Life's Summit

ONE DAY in California I climbed Mount Lowe. Some of you, no doubt, have climbed that old brown sentinel of the orange belt of Southern California. That day I went from Los Angeles, "city of the angels"—and real estate agents, to Pasadena, and then to Altadena, and those other little "denas" and things every half-mile till I got to Mount Lowe's feet, or foothills.

We went up Rubio Canyon until we came to the triangular thing the guide-book calls an "engineering miracle." We got into this and then were boosted—no, yanked—thirty-five hundred feet upward. We quickly rose out of that hungry looking chasm, up the side of that granite cliff to the top of Echo Mountain, with only two little rails and some ropes between me and—depending upon how I had lived!

Then on the top of Echo Mountain we got out of that lifter thing, and discovered it

wasn't a mountain-top at all, but a shelf on the side of the greater mountain. Here we got into a trolley-car and went about five miles farther up the side of Mount Lowe, without a straight rail in the track. Every minute a new thrill—and no two thrills alike! Five miles of winding and squirming, and twisting and ducking, and dodging and summersaulting!

We went over so many wooden bridges that squeaked. Where I would grab the seat and lift!

We came to the headliner thrill. Money positively refunded at the gate if not as advertised! I saw it coming! Oo-oo-oo! The car ran out on a wooden shelf that man had nailed to the perpendicular face of the rock wall. Where my life hung on the honesty of the man who drove the nails.

I wondered if he had been working by the day or by the job when he drove those nails!

I would look over the edge of the car, down —down—down!

I would look on the other side of the car at the face of the cliff we were hugging, up—up—up! About a mile either way, straight

up or straight down. And no place to resign!

We were five thousand feet when the car stopped. We were on another shelf they call Alpine Tavern. Science here surrendered. Mount Lowe's summit was eleven hundred feet above—three miles more of a climb up that wriggling trail.

All alone that forenoon I went up that trail.

* * *

Getting Above the Clouds

And finally I got on a rock flat as this floor—Mount Lowe's summit, more than a mile above the plain. You can't describe such a wonderful experience with this poor human vocabulary. You must live it. That pure, clear day I could look down thru the swimming, quivering space into the citrus empire of Southern California, all spread out in one great mosaic of turquoise and amber and emerald. My field-glass swept vistas of many miles in one great panoramic picture. The miles were an inch long on my Mount Lowe map. It took an hour to look

in any direction, there was so much to see!

Right below me Los Angeles, and Pasadena! To my right, perhaps forty miles, the Pacific Ocean. It seemed so near I could throw a pebble into the waves. But when I tried it, it fell on my toes. How a mountain does deceive!

To my back the granite cliff rising higher. And I discovered that Mount Lowe's summit is just another shelf on the side of the higher Sierras. Over at my left "Old Baldy," twelve thousand feet, and snow eternally on his head.

I get a better vision of the Infinite. I am in one of His great workshops!

Presently clouds come in the valley below me. I had gotten above the clouds! The clouds grew blacker and spread out until they covered the valley. Presently it dawned on me that rain is falling in the valley. It is a real storm down there. The people are saying, "It is raining; the sun doesn't shine; the sky is all gone."

But I was standing on the mountain top. The sun was shining on me, and the sky was all serene over my head. The storm was all

down under my feet. I had gotten above the storm, into the sunshine!

I had gotten a mile above the valley and there were millions of miles of sunshine above me.

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Presently the storm was over. The valley came out all the brighter for the washing. I went clambering down the mountainside. But before the journey was done, the shadows came spreading again over the valley.

Then I looked over in the southwest and saw the sun sinking. Lower and lower it dipped until its red lips kissed the blue cheek of the ocean. The molten glory and the liquid rainbows spread out over the southwest, and the shadows came eastward over the valley, wider and wider, until presently the valley was black with shadows. The lights began to twinkle in the cities of the valley, and I knew it was night down there. The people were saying, "The sun doesn't shine; the night has come."

But as I turned and looked back up the mountain, I saw the glorious radiance of the

sun bathing Mount Lowe's summit, while the darkness filled the valley. It was night in the valley and day on the mountain-top!

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O GOD! I HEAR THY VOICE. I hear it in the valley and on the mountain-top. I hear it in the storm, in the night and the light!

Child of humanity, are you in the storm? Climb higher and you come to the calm.

Are you in the night? Climb yet higher, and you come to the light.

For the peace and the light are right above us—above the storm and the night.

And life is the journey from the storm and the night to the peace and the light.

I have been climbing my life-mountain these years. I have stumbled and fallen so many times. I have said, "I cannot carry my burden longer." But now I find myself farther up the mountain-side, and my eyes open wider and I look back and see that all the bumps were lessons. All the rocks were steps in the great stairway that somehow had to be built to make me climb higher.

Every day gets better, because every day we get a little farther up. Every day we look down upon some storms that used to terrify us. Every day we rise above the legacy of our limitations. None of these things move us now.

Today is our best day, because today we are highest up.

So our last days of earth become our best.

Some day my night will come. It will spread over the valley of material things. But I shall stand on the mountain-top, my Nebo, in the day, and the night will be down in the valley with the storms. I shall find life's mountain-top just another shelf on the side of the Mountain of Infinite Unfolding.

I shall have risen but the first mile. I shall have the millions of miles yet above me!

I shall find this mountain-top day just a grander Commencement Day, with Commencement Days and Master's Degrees never ending as I rise thru Eternity!

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